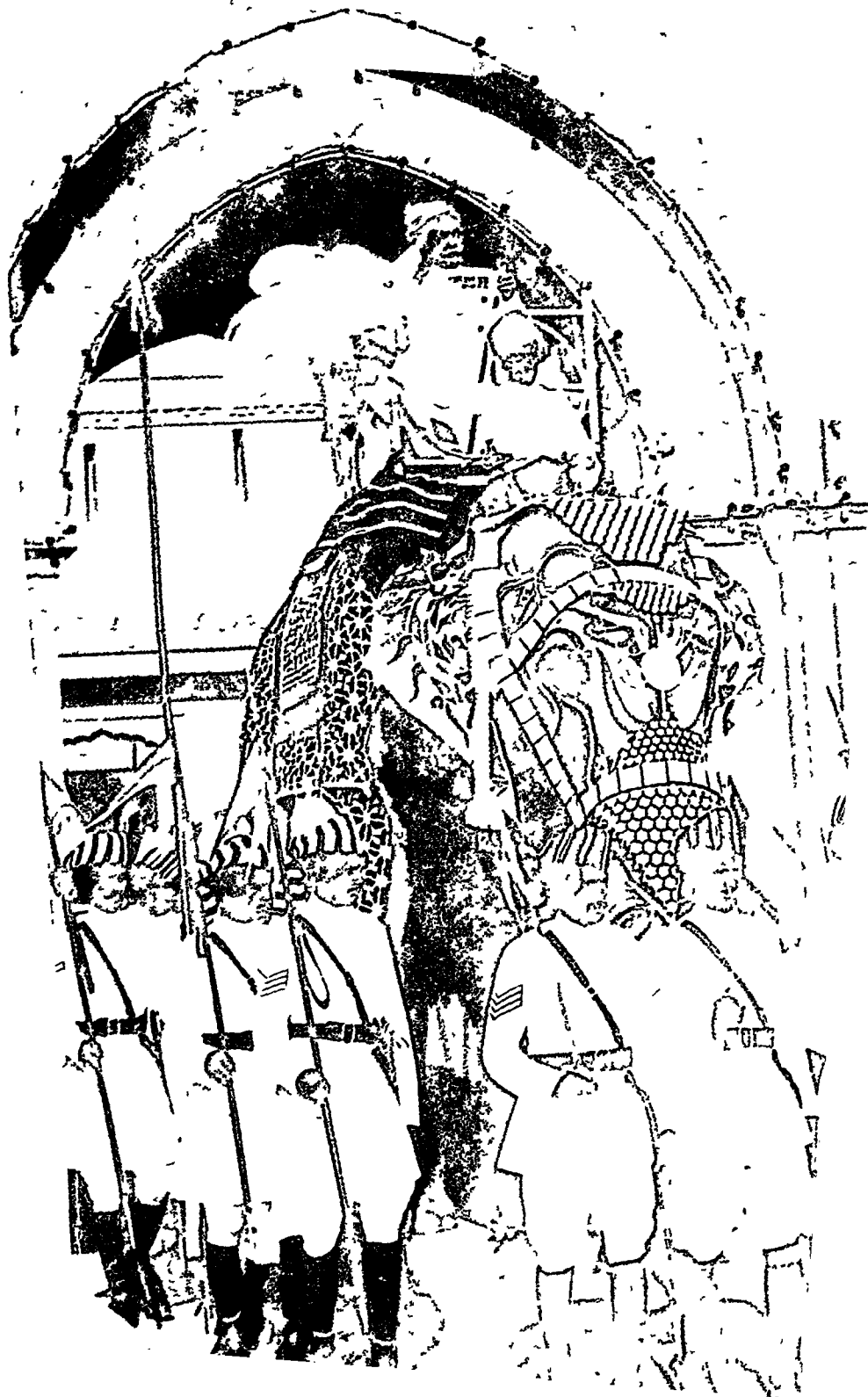
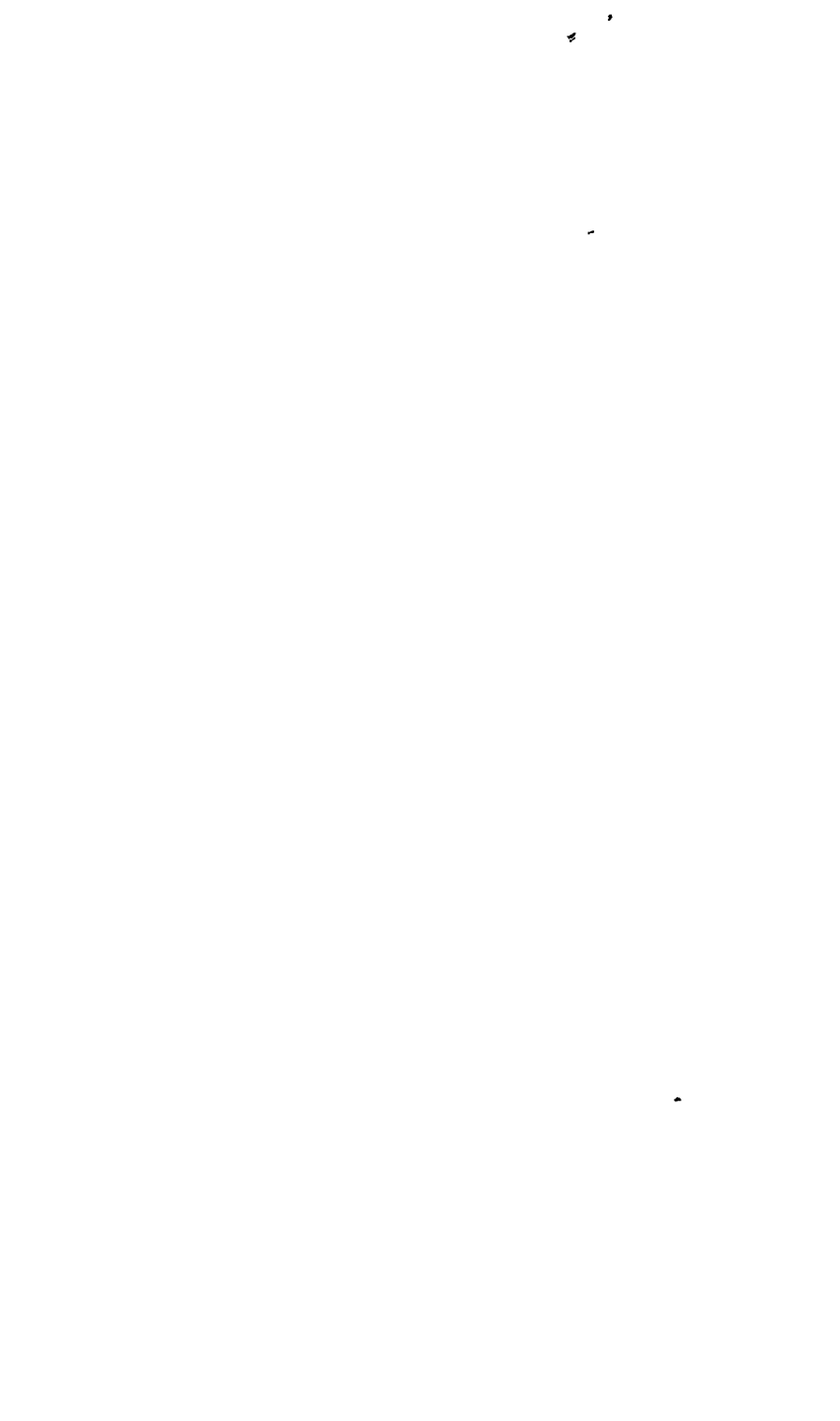


CENERAL HIS HIGHNESS MAHARAJA SRI GANGA  
SINGHJI BAHADUR, MAHARAJA OF BIKANER,

On the occasion of his Golden Jubilee

Bikaner stands first in the 1941 Rajasthan Census as  
showing the highest percentage increase in population  
both of the State and of its Capital





# THESE TEN YEARS

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*A SHORT ACCOUNT  
OF THE  
1941 CENSUS OPERATIONS  
IN  
RAJPUTANA AND AJMER-MERWARA  
WRITTEN SPECIALLY FOR  
THE GENERAL PUBLIC*

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By  
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PRINTED AT THE BRITISH INDIA PRESS, BOMBAY, BY A. E. DOCTOR, MANAGER,  
AND PUBLISHED BY THE CENSUS DEPARTMENT OF INDIA

## PREFACE.

THERE IS A SAYING (somewhat hackneyed perhaps) that there are three kinds of lies in the world—plain lies, damn lies and statistics. I do not know whether it is to this libel (or is it a half-truth ?) or merely to the esoteric form of their presentation that the unpopularity of Census Reports with the general public is to be attributed. Certain it is that the average layman gives them a wide berth. In doing this, however, he deprives himself of a chance of acquiring much interesting and useful knowledge about his fellow creatures. That is a pity, since the Socratic dictum ‘Know thyself’ is applicable even more to peoples than to individuals.

So for 1941 it has been decided to attempt a more popular presentation, thus following the advice given by Sir G. S. Bajpai to those who attended a recent Statistical Conference at Benares that. “You should explain your processes in a language which is intelligible to the ordinary citizen.”

With this end in view all tables and subsidiary tables—those grim columns crammed with small type and long figures so repelling to the layman—have been relegated to a separate volume, a sort of inner sanctum into which only their devotees should enter.

The pages of this volume have been written primarily for the ordinary citizen. They contain, stripped of the clutter of husk, the kernel of all the census harvest reaped during 1940 and 1941, and presented, it is hoped, without any of that tediousness which is so often an adjunct to

scientific treatment. The greatest care has been taken to avoid drawing conclusions from figures, the accuracy of which is open to doubt.

In form this volume is an essay designed to afford a general view of Rajputana and Ajmer-Merwara in the light of information just collected. Its limits are the confines of Rajputana, its time factor the last decade with, now and then, a peep into the future, and its theme the life of the province viewed as an organic whole. At the end are several appendices which, it is hoped, will provide further interesting reading.

JAIPUR, 1st August 1941.

A. W. T. W.

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Stop Press . . . . .

Map of Rajputana & Ajmer-Merwara

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DAWN OF THE TWENTY-SECOND OF FEBRUARY, 1941, broke fine over Rajputana, 'Land of the Sons of Kings,' and over the tiny British enclave of Ajmer-Merwara nestling in the bosom of that romantic tract.

As the mounting sun struck, with serene impartiality, across the rugged Aravalli hills, the flat sandy deadlands of the north and west and the lush jungles of the south and east, there emerged from more than seventeen thousand homes the members of a singular army. It numbered in its ranks men of almost every caste and creed, high-born, low-born, rich and poor. Its grades were \*five: its purpose single—to catch once and to count but once every man, woman and child of the fourteen odd millions that inhabit this land. Their arms and equipment?—Just pens, booklets of instructions printed in the language each knew best, and a pad of slips, buff-coloured and of pocket-size, marked with numbers and designs almost hieroglyphic to the uninitiated. But there was the light of battle in their eyes.

Early morning of the same day found the writer of this essay up and eager to be starting. As a jumping-off place he had chosen Brijnagar, the capital of Jhalawar State, tucked away in the south-eastern remoteness of the battle area. His urgency was that of all the members of the

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\* (i) Census Enumerators (the Sepoys) each with a limited objective of about thirty houses, (ii) Circle Supervisors (the N C O's) each in charge of ten Enumerators; (iii) Charge Superintendents (the Company Commanders) in charge of about four hundred Enumerators, (iv) The State Census Superintendents and District Census Officers (the Battalion Commanders) and, lastly (v) the Provincial Census Superintendent (the General) responsible for the whole Census Operations in Rajputana and Ajmer-Merwara

aforesaid army, for he was their 'General,' and due to set out upon a lightning tour throughout the province and to cover the \*ten days, during which the whole operation was to be completed.

The car sped along the road which leads north through Kotah. Frequent stops were made at townships and villages on or near the road, to see members of the army at their work.

At Jhalrapatan (the City of Bells) an examination of †answers recorded suggested that a reversal of the natural order (one so often sighed for by mothers of large families) had miraculously occurred—the husbands of that place, not their wives, had the babies. This astonishing phenomenon called for investigation.

"Sir," explained the 'Company Commander' on that battle-front, "children in India are regarded as the property of the father. Ergo, in answer to questions as to size of family, we must ignore the females."

"I see," said the 'General' thoughtfully .....then added: "Yet consider: A fine young man (yourself for instance) might father a child for each day of the year. The ladies you thus honoured could, however, except for an odd batch of twins or triplets, only produce one

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\* The central date for the enumeration was March 1st. The counting of householders (the fixed population) began at sunrise on February 22nd and continued till sunset of February 28th. On March 1st the floating population was counted. Then March 2nd and 3rd were used to check the work done between February 22nd and 28th to relate it to the central day, March 1st. Enumeration slips for those enumerated but who had died before 1st March were cancelled and new ones made out for babies born after February 22nd but before March 1st.

† For the 1941 Census there were 20 questions for males and 22 for females.

child every nine months. I think, therefore, you had better enter children on their mother's enumeration slip.... But, by all means, get the information from the fathers. It would be unfortunate if, due to the Census, the ladies were to get wrong notions."

"Jo hukum."

During the course of that day and ensuing days, reports from all fronts trickled in. It was interesting to learn how 'India's teeming millions' were taking the inquisition.

Information that a mass attack was to be made upon them had been by no means withheld from them. Indeed, through the press, over the air, by printed leaflet and spoken word—all the most up-to-date weapons of propaganda, in fact—warnings had been broadcast for some weeks past. Then, too, as far back as November of the previous year, a register of all houses and families had been prepared, and a number painted on or affixed to every building.

Prepared *generally* for the onslaught the people certainly had been; but the specific, and in some cases almost intimate, questions, they were now being called upon to answer, were having reactions, some humorous, some mildly serious.

For instance, there was the case of the young married lady, who, asked how many children she had, tossed her comely head at this exhibition of 'freshness' on the part of the Enumerator, as she conceived it to be, and replied witheringly: "Two hundred, and you're not the father of a single one."

This same question and the one that followed it in the questionnaire (age of the mother at the birth of first child) nearly caused a riot in a Muslim Mohalla of Ajmer City. 'The faithful' drove out the Enumerator and refused to give any replies, since they considered themselves insulted by inquiries about "those who should be nameless." A tactful 'Battalion Commander' saved the situation.

"As you wish," he told them sweetly. "I'll just show all your houses as vacant."

"Do.....What harm will that do us?"

"Only this: that when the municipal elections take place, there will be no votes for you."

"Here.....where's that Enumerator? Tell him to come back quick."

A whole crop of difficulties arose in the Bhil country. Those simple folk got it into their heads that the Census was connected with the \*war in Europe. As a result of this many of them fled to the jungles, and much time and effort had to be expended in allaying their fears and persuading them to return. Even so their nervousness persisted, as the following story of a Bhil citizen of Kushalgarh will show. Immediately after the enumeration this worthy ran post-haste to the Manager of the Estate and expostulated with him on the heartless conduct of the Enumerator, who had noted down ALL his nine sons.

Late on the evening of the tenth day, the 'General' arrived back at his headquarters at

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\* Bhils were not alone in entertaining this suspicion. The case was reported of a Mahajan Agarwal who only consented to giving details about his sons on condition they were returned as Jains, a caste that is never recruited for the army.

Ajmer, dusty, weary but content. He sighed happily, for his part in the Great Indian Census Enumeration had been satisfactorily carried out by all ranks under his command. Once more the phoenix (to use the term applied so aptly to the Indian Census by the Census Commissioner for India) had risen full-grown from its own ashes of a decade before, only to be hurled back into them after ten days of wild flight.

## II

FOR THE BENEFIT OF THOSE READERS WHO have no clear picture either of the geographical features of this province or of its inhabitants, a quick glance at both is the minimum essential for a clear understanding of what follows.

\*Tod has suggested that Guru Sikhar, the highest point of Mount Abu, is the best vantage point from which to get a bird's-eye view of the country. Let us take his advice, for no better guide to Rajputana has yet been born.

We find ourselves at the southern extremity of the Aravalli hills (Adobala in local dialect) which, trending generally in a northerly direction, divide Rajputana into two unequal and widely differing portions. To the west and north-west lies the Marudesh, the 'Deadlands' a vast area, comprising the States of Sirohi, Marwar, Bikaner, Jaisalmer and the Sheikhawati Nizamat of Jaipur. No perennial streams water this

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\* Lieut -Colonel James Tod (1782—1835) formerly Political Agent to the Western Rajput States and father of modern historians of Rajputana. Though for his work he received singularly little official recognition during his lifetime, his name will live long in the hearts of the people he served so magnificently and portrayed so intimately.

region : it is parched, sand-bound and arid save for one man-created oasis around Ganganagar, where His Highness of Bikaner has made the desert 'blossom as the rose.' But of this more anon.

Over much of this tract, in the dim past, have flowed the waters of the Indian Ocean. Indeed, in many parts of Jaisalmer there still remains the illusion of a tide recently gone out but forgotten to return, leaving great stretches of thirsty, flat rock gasping in the sunlight. And, where once the ocean's waters ebbed and flowed, now the desert tide advances, slowly and remorselessly. That, at least, would appear to be the evidence of such a place-name as \*Chatradhara (the confluence of the four rivers), still borne by a nullah, deep in blown sand, but through which, in living memory, no water has been known to pass.

The inhabitants of the more favoured tracts of Rajputana have no illusions as to what one who crosses the Aravallis may expect. Their views on this region, suggestive to them of some heartless region of Purgatory, are expressed pithily in many a Hindi couplet. From among these the following have been selected as typical :

- (a) Oh : curse this Sheikhawati land ;  
My bread's half wheatmeal and half sand
- (b) Once the Aravallis cross'd  
Hope of home's forever lost
- (c) Ahu, Bedu, Isru (hell-holes of Marwar)—  
No other spot with them vies ;  
Teeming with bugs, red-hot, almost waterless,  
And sand-dunes high as the skies

---

\* Near Harsh village in Sikar Thikana.

In such regions the importance of a water-supply is paramount. Where water has been found (often at great depths) a village has sprung up, generally to receive a name ending in 'sar' 'sara,' 'kor,' 'par', or 'tala', all denoting a well.

The coming of roads, railways, motor-buses and aeroplanes has done much to mitigate the hardships of travellers to or settlers in these inhospitable climes. Since they illustrate how almost miraculous has been the change, the writer's own experiences may perhaps be tolerated.

In 1889, as a babe, he journeyed with his parents from Bikaner to the nearest rail-head. The journey was performed in a camel-carriage and occupied fourteen days. Years later he did the same journey by rail: it took some twenty hours. Recently he flew the same route in approximately two hours.

But these changes as yet hardly affect Jaisalmer. A traveller in that crazy wilderness and with the miles heavy on his feet would agree heartily with the bard who sang:

Find you a steed that is tough as oak,  
A saddle lasting as stone,  
A shirt that's woven from strands of steel,  
Then dare to see Jaisal's throne

So much for the western prospect as viewed from the top of Guru Sikhar.

To the East, protected by the Aravallis from the ever-drifting sand, lies a far more favoured region—a region of cultivated plains and wooded hills, intersected by two noble rivers, the Chambal and the Banas.



In the heart of this region lies the State of Mewar, to whose prince all Rajputs bow as the 'Sun of the Hindus.' He himself, with becoming modesty, does not even sign as Prince of Mewar, but as Dewan of Eklinga, the tutelary god of his house.

But not at once when east of the Aravallis does the desert relinquish its sovereignty. Tradition has it that the great James Tod demarcated the boundary between Marwar and Mewar States on the basis of this couplet :

Anwal Anwal Mewar,  
Bambool Bambool Marwar

Both this yellow-flowering shrub (Anwal) and the thorny Bambool are children of the sands.

Mewar in its turn is divided by nature into two distinct areas. The south-west portion embraces the wildest spurs of the Aravallis and is known as the Hilly Tracts of Mewar. The north-east consists of an elevated plateau sloping gradually down to the plains of Malwa, but diversified by rock-built citadels, gleaming lakes and impenetrable forests. Beyond the northern borders of Mewar lie the States of Tonk, Kishangarh, Jaipur, Karauli, Alwar, Bharatpur and Dholpur, with the little British-Indian district of Ajmer-Merwara wedged in between Mewar and Marwar; to the southward Danta and Palanpur and then the younger scions of Mewar—Dungarpur, Banswara and Partabgarh; to the east Haraoti, the land of the Haras, comprising Bundi and Kotah, with Jhalawar beyond.

Probably the abiding impression, which even a bird's-eye view of Rajputana leaves on the mind, can be summed up in these words—castles

and chhatris. Almost every hill of any prominence and every pass is crowned by a fort with an air of dark brooding. Each town, unless it be an upstart of the last hundred years, is walled; while, over the country-side, are strewn domed memorials, grim yet dainty reminders of the immortality of death. And so frequently does one come across Suttee stones that the pity of them almost ceases to pain.

And here before leaving this subject it may be mentioned that, in the presentation of census statistics, it is usual to partition a province into areas which possess more or less homogeneous physical features, and these are styled Natural Divisions. Were this system to be followed in Rajputana, then about three-fifths would come into the North-West dry area, and the rest into the Central India Plateau, with the exception of the States of Alwar, Bharatpur and Dholpur which form part of the Indo-Gangetic Plain. But boundaries thus drawn would at times ignore State boundaries, and as each State is an independent unit, any scheme for division by Natural Divisions would only be of academic interest. Such divisions have therefore been ignored in the preparation of Census Tables.

If it is asked: "How large then is this province just described?" perhaps the best reply will be to give some comparisons with other provinces and countries. Figures rarely afford any vivid idea of size.

Rajputana and Ajmer-Merwara combined contain a greater area than the United Provinces or Bengal, and only a little less than Madras, Baluchistan or the Punjab. Comparing the figures with some of the countries outside India

which are nearest in size, Rajputana and Ajmer-Merwara combined are larger than the United Kingdom, Norway or Italy. These comparisons give some idea of the immense tracts with which the Indian Census deals, even in one Province alone. Few people realize that the whole operation covers a population which is one-fifth of all the inhabitants of this earth.

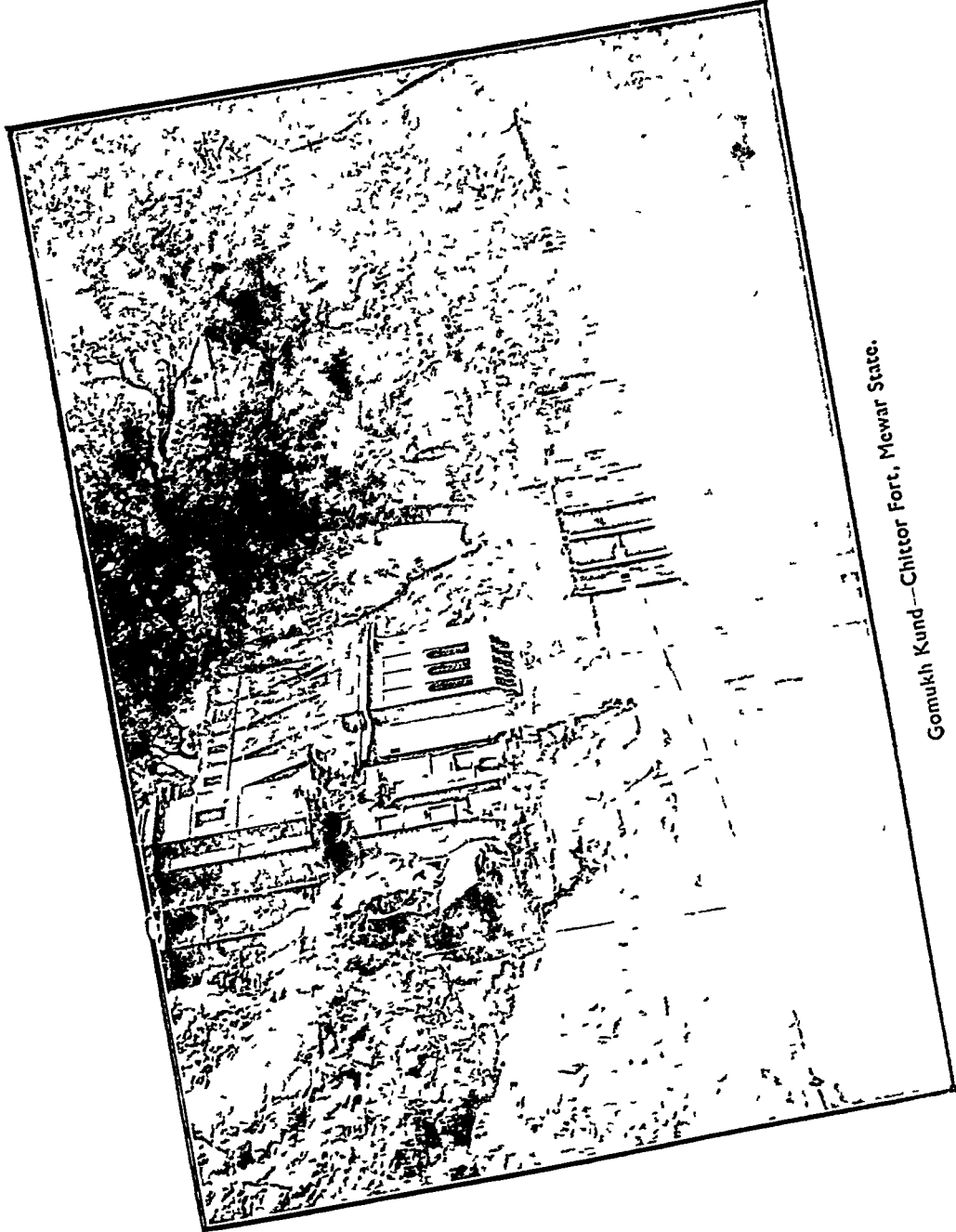
Yet since some readers may wish for more precise knowledge on this point, it may be well perhaps to add the following information for their special benefit.

Rajputana and Ajmer-Merwara are roughly rhombic in shape, with east-west and north-south diagonals, the former about 540 miles long and the latter about 510. Their areas together are, according to the Government of India Survey, 134,959 square miles, of which only 2,400 are for Ajmer-Merwara. The Aravalli mountains, which intersect the province from end to end, form a line running north-east and south-west, from Delhi to the plains of Guzerat, about 430 miles long. Approximately three-fifths of the province lie north-west of this range, and two-fifths to the south-east.

### III

NEXT WE MUST TAKE AN EQUALLY RAPID GLANCE at the people who inhabit these regions.

It takes all kinds to make a world, and this common place is equally true of any corner of it. People of all kinds, of course, there are to be found in Rajputana, but space requires that we should consider here only broad classes. These



Gomukh Kund—Chittor Fort, Mewar State.



may be said to be the aristocratic or ruling class, mainly Rajputs; the middle classes—traders, bankers, members of the professions and officials; the agriculturists and, lastly, the primitive or quasi-primitive tribes.

For the purposes of this essay we are concerned chiefly with these people as we find them to-day. Whence, for instance, came the Rajputs, what their origin? The answers to these and all such questions must be sought elsewhere. It will suffice here to state that the Rajputs are the ruling class in nineteen out of the twenty-three States and Chiefships of Rajputana and in Ajmer-Merwara. They are divided into many clans which, in the past, have warred incessantly among themselves. Happily for Rajputana their clan fights had, as a rule and at any rate till the Mahrattas were invited to join in, little or no effect on the country as a whole. It seems that this bellicose tribe early learnt the lesson that to provoke a rough-house in the larder is an infallible receipt for starvation. As far as possible, therefore, they did not let their quarrels affect the great mass of the people, the merchants and agriculturists.

The Pax Britannica has put a check on their warlike propensities or guided them into other channels such as the Indian Army, and Chiefs' Colleges have tried to tame them. Yet those who know them best harbour doubts as to whether the changes wrought are more than superficial. Perhaps their own subjects are, in part at least, to blame. Village life is dull and the presence of a feudal lord, however petty, who is willing to keep up state and entertain lavishly, helps to dispel monotony and to oil the cogs of trade. Even his exactions

and tyrannies, if not carried too far, may serve to give an added zest to living. So he remains, the Rajput Thakur, much as he was except that his lance grows rusty, enjoying life as one "to the manor born", and hugging fiercely those hereditary privileges and rights (so often merely the wrongs of others) and those lazy old customs which the present war is being waged largely to destroy. In the words of one of their own bards: "If God grant me men-servants and maid-servants, land to possess, a well-stocked wine cellar for enjoyment with my beloved, also a manager to attend to my affairs, then will I ( the Rajput ) ask for nothing more."

Other members of this class may be said to be the ruling families of Palanpur, Tonk, Dholpur and Bharatpur States. The first two named are Muslim and rose to their present position out of the confusion caused by the decline of the Moghul Empire though at different times. Actually the Tonk Nawabship was founded by that highly successful free-booter, Amir Khan. The remaining two are Jat and they, because modern Hindu opinion places the Rajput at the top of the scale of power and aristocratic blood, affect a Rajput descent. Ethnologists, however, will hardly admit the validity of this \*claim. Whether all Brahmins, due to the sanctity of their persons, should be placed in this class or not, is a matter of taste. Certainly, it is felt, the high-priests ( the Mahants ) of the many great temples of Rajputana might properly find a place there.

Turning next to the middle class community we collect a very mixed bag containing a

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\* Quoted from " Chiefs of Rajputana " by Colonel T. H. Handley.

variety of castes. These, however, for our purposes can be grouped under one general heading 'Vaisya', with a sprinkling of Brahmins, who no longer rely only on religion as a means of livelihood. Its members earn their living in the professions and as bankers, traders, officials, jewellers, etc. Artisans, though not as a rule Vaisyas, have been included with them for convenience. In ancient Hindu periods and also, in the main, under their Mahomedan conquerors the Vaisyas had no political weight or authority. It is not an exaggeration to state that they were scarcely deemed worthy of consideration by the aristocratic classes. It is to British rule in no small measure then that they are indebted for their present satisfactory social standing and wide opportunities for advancement.

As a class the Vaisyas are disliked by both those above them and those below them. Their business transactions are said to be marked by the hard-headedness of a Scot and the relentless greed of a Jew. There is a \*couplet about them, often quoted, which says: "Tulsi, never trust the son of a Bania. He will keep you well pleased and pretend to be your most humble servant. But he will part you from all you possess."

Probably this is too severe condemnation. Hard in driving a bargain they certainly are, but, fortune made, they often become public benefactors. When the poor possessor of only a *lota* and roll of blankets, who left his desert

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\* Other similar proverbs are as follows. "A man who has a Bania for a friend has no need of an enemy", "The rogue cheats strangers and the Bania cheats his friends"; "A Bania will start an auction in the desert"

† "He goes with a *lota* and returns with a *lakh*"



home at an early age for Calcutta, Delhi or Bombay determined to make money, returns as 'Sethji,' he then begins to work for a good name. He often keeps up considerable state, feeds Brahmins, the poor, cows and pigeons, builds temples, provides a water-supply for his home-town or village, endows schools, hospitals and orphanages, or founds dharamsalas for weary travellers. Even the little village Bania advances both money and seed to his fellow-villagers in bad years, when they could not obtain succour elsewhere, thereby often saving them from starvation. True he expects ample returns for his investment, but he does not always get them.

When we come to consider the agricultural classes, it has to be borne in mind that, outside the larger cities and towns, practically everyone turns farmer for a few months in each year. There are, however, certain castes which may be classified as purely agriculturists. Notable among these are the Jats and Gujars.

With the possible exception of the Sikhs and other northern immigrants to the canal areas of Bikaner, the farmers of Rajputana are still more or less in the "subsistence stage." By this term is meant that the production of food for the family is the first care of the individual peasant. They seem to have advanced remarkably little through the centuries: their methods of tillage, the crops they sow, even their diet, have scarcely changed. Recently, however, forces like Rural Uplift Associations and certain political bodies have been in operation in an effort to stimulate the growth of intelligence. Curiously enough the chief effect so far noticeable has been the demand for lower revenue

assessment. The notion that they only get out of their lands a relatively small part of what those lands can produce, or that there may be other ways of living than the one they so obstinately cling to, have failed singularly to make any appeal to them. Often it has struck the writer, that these people lack stores of mental and material comfort largely because they prefer ease to effort. But this thought fringes on the question of the effects of climate, an important subject which must be left for later consideration. Possibly, however, the peasantry will be forced to awaken to realities between 1946 and 1956 when the two millions that have been added to the population of Rajputana in the last decade will attain majority and be making their demand felt for room and employment.

Probably no class is so affected by the quality of the administration under which it lives as are farmers. The reason for this, in Rajputana at least, is that by far the largest part of a State's income comes as a rule from land revenues. The word 'administration' denotes the organization and methods by which a State endeavours to attain its objects, and, consequently, the nature of the administration at any given time depends in great measure on the ends in view. In Ajmer-Merwara the ends are tolerably clear; in some States of Rajputana, however, the ends are not so obvious. It would make an interesting study to correlate quality of administration with the condition of the peasants under it. Unfortunately this at present is neither possible nor likely to be well-received in some quarters.

There is one further factor, which must always be borne in mind when considering the

agriculturists of this province. It is the liability of practically the whole region they inhabit to recurring periods of famine with their ghastly toll of human and animal mortality. Such a calamity is always present in their imaginations and certainly imparts a tinge of \*pessimism to their outlook. This consideration, however, forms the background of the picture rather than the picture itself.

Lastly we have to consider the primitive tribes resident in the province. These are the Bhils, Minas, Girassias, Rawats and Merats, the last being numerically insignificant.

The Bhils, who inhabit the hilly tracts of Danta, Mewar, Dungarpur and the south-west corner of the province, generally represent, if not the aboriginal, at least the oldest inhabitants. Considerable changes have been taking place among these people, as we shall see later. Many of them, however, still cling to their old ways and are to be seen wandering about in the forests that clothe the hills, armed with bows and arrows. They are a short, wiry and by no means unattractive race.

One local authority would allow no distinction between Minas and Bhils. After very careful inquiry, however, the writer is satisfied that this view is erroneous. Whatever may be the origin of the Minas, and that is uncertain, their only affinity to the Bhils perhaps is the fact that they were among the earliest inhabitants of Rajputana.

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\* Expressed in the couplet: "A bed with a new mattress, a thatched roof which does not leak, 2 or 3 she-buffaloes to milk, a dish of Bajra mixed with curds—if God grant me these I shall ask no more."

According to \*Sherring the Girassias are said to be descended from Chauhan Rajputs, who were in the country before the Sisodias conquered Chittor. They have lost most of their Rajput customs and are now a wild race associating closely with the Bhils, whose daughters they take to wife, and they now live apart from more civilized people.

The same authority describes the Merats as degenerate Mahomedans of Merwara, who originally sprang from the Hindu Mers. The Rawats, who are Hindus, must be considered as allied to the Merats, as they, too, are Mers in origin, while Mers, according to Tod, are a branch of the Chitas, who in their turn are an important sub-division of the Minas. Thus all these tribes can be said to belong either to Bhil or Mina stock. As to why the Meos of Alwar have not been placed in this class is a mystery, which the writer has failed to elucidate.

To conclude this brief general survey of the inhabitants of Rajputana and Ajmer-Merwara it will be interesting to recall what John Jourdain, who visited those parts in 1610, wrote of them. These were his words: "They live like fishes in the sea—the greater eat the lesser."

Have three hundred and thirty years wrought much change?..... Possibly only this: the lesser fishes have grown tougher with the years and are not so easily digested.

#### IV

OUR GENERAL SURVEY COMPLETED,  
THE READER is in the position of a traveller

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\* The Revd M. A. Sherring, author of "Hindu Tribes and Castes"

planning to set out on a sight-seeing expedition. He has studied the guide books, time-tables, etc., and has gained sufficient information to consider his itinerary in detail. As his guide, the writer now proposes to conduct him on three grand tours, each complete in itself and having only one particular object in mind, yet so planned that the knowledge gained from all, when brought together, can provide a composite picture of the whole.

The first tour will permit the traveller to obtain an insight into the position as regards the population of Rajputana and Ajmer-Merwara, its size, its density and how it fits into the land it inhabits. The second will be a conducted tour through the chief Cities and through the States and Districts; while the third will take him among the people themselves, that mixed multitude of men, women and children in all conditions of life.

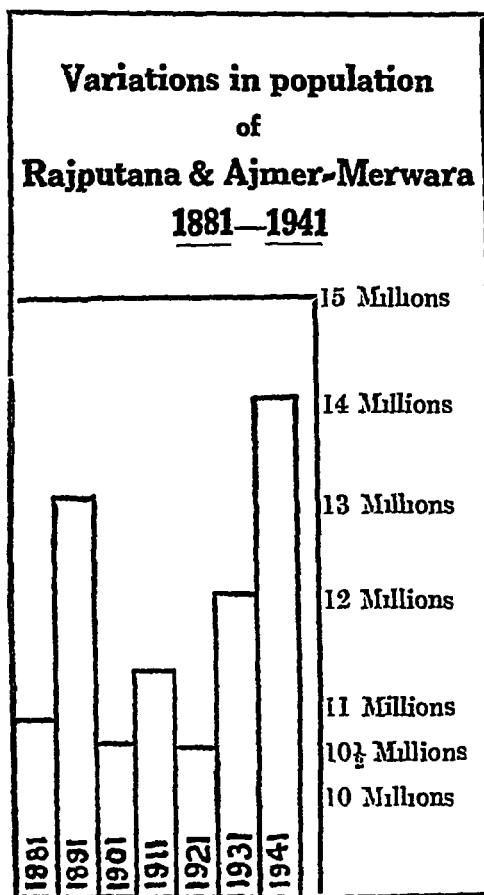
Let us start straightaway on tour No. 1.

In considering the population, the most immediate requirement is to know what has been happening to it during the last ten years, the period which the 1941 Census covers.

The first and perhaps most striking fact to be recorded is that, between the years 1931 and 1941, some seventy-seven thousand persons have been added to the population of Ajmer-Merwara, and a little over two millions to that of Rajputana. The latest population figures (in round numbers) for these two areas are 13,670,000 and 584,000 respectively, the highest ever recorded since the first Census was taken.

Thus stated baldly, however, these figures convey really a very inadequate idea of their true nature.

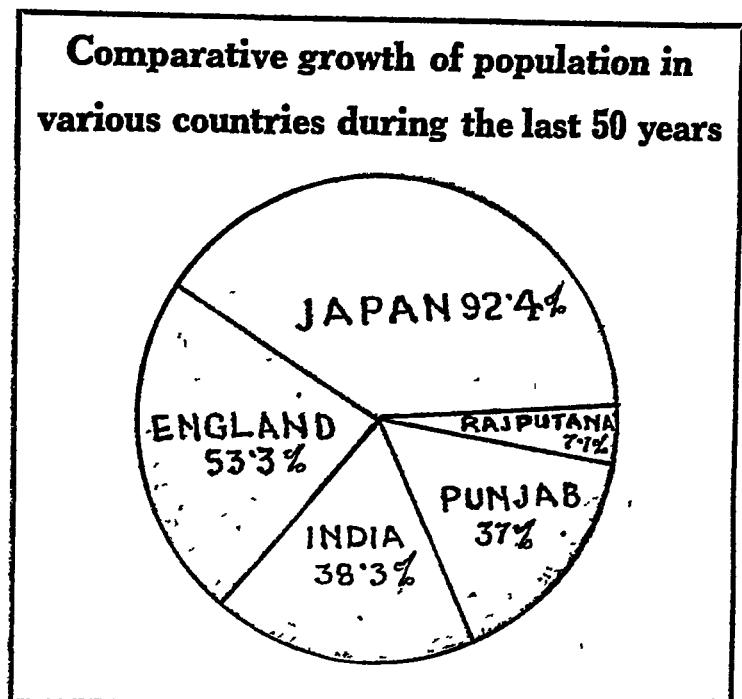
In the first place the province has not grown to its present strength all of a sudden : the population of to-day is the outcome of what it was yesterday. So we must know how these figures compare with those of past censuses. The following diagram will be useful for this purpose. It is



indeed all that we can get, for we have no materials for looking very far back into the past.

Another way which will help us to understand these figures is to compare them with

those of other provinces of India, of India as a whole and of some foreign countries. Again a diagram will serve far better than figures interspersed with words :—



From these two diagrams certain facts emerge. In the first place the population of this province has shown violent fluctuations since 1881. Then, compared with all-India, certain Indian provinces and some other countries, this province, on an average, has expanded far less rapidly.

Now let us examine a little more closely these figures of increase in Rajputana and Ajmer-Merwara.

As has already been pointed out the province is by no means homogeneous, but any

*strict* apportioning into natural divisions would ignore the boundaries of those units, the States, for which we have to compile separate census data. It is possible, however, to separate these States *roughly* into three, more or less, distinct groups. A glance at the map provided at the end of this Volume and at the list given below will be helpful.

<i>Western Group</i>	<i>Southern Group</i>	<i>Eastern Group</i>
Bikaner	Banswara	Ajmer-Merwara
Jaisalmer	Dungarpur	Alwar
Marwar	Kushalgarh	Bharatpur
Shekawati	Mewar	Bundi
(Jaipur)	Partabgarh	Dholpur
	Sirohi	Jaipur (excluding Shekawati.)
	Palanpur	Jhalawar
	Danta	Karauli
		Kishangarh
		Kotah
		Lawa
		Shahpura
		Tonk

The Western Group, by far the largest of the three in area, embraces the 'great' and 'little' deserts of India. It is the group with the scantiest and most uncertain rainfall, and, as a result, the most liable to famine. Mr. Kealy in 1911 quoted this ancient couplet which purports to be Famine's reply to his mother when asked his address:—

My feet are in Pungal,  
My head is in Merta,  
My belly's in Bikaner  
In forgetful moments  
I'll visit Jodhpur ,  
But I'm always in Jaisalmer.



Another proverb of Marwar says :—" Expect one lean year in three, one famine year in eight. "

The Southern Group is, for the most part, a network of forest-clad hills enclosing fertile and well-watered valleys and tablelands. There are, however, more open tracts to be found in the centre of Mewar, in parts of Sirohi and in Palanpur.

The Eastern Group is mainly flat, with a sprinkling of rocky hills. It enjoys, as a rule, a sufficient rainfall, has good soil, and is traversed by most of the largest rivers of Rajputana. It is also better served by railways and roads than the other divisions.

With this knowledge we might expect to find that the population increase would be greatest in the Eastern Group, a little less perhaps in the Southern Group and lowest in the Western Group. It is, therefore, not a little disturbing to one's sense of probability to find that the exact opposite is the case. Here are the figures:—

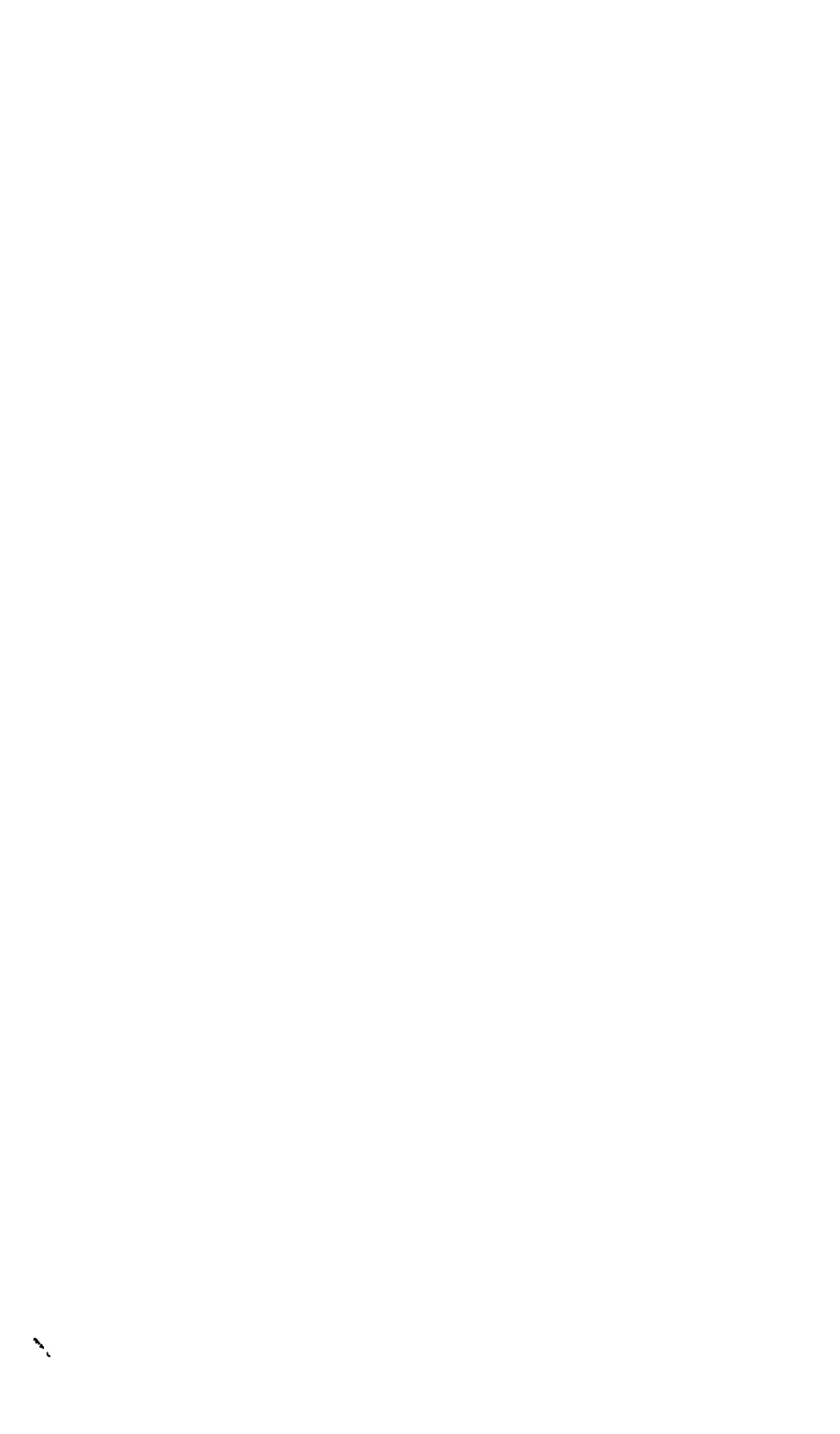
**Population increases by Natural Groups.**

Group	1941	1931.	1881-1931
Eastern .. ..	13%	10%	9%
Southern .. ..	17 „	15 „	15 „
Western .. ..	26 „	23 „	21 „

These figures are all the more striking when we look at the losses in population in the various



The Fort of Jaisalmer—Jaisalmer State



groups directly traceable to the Chappania or Great Famine of 1898-99. Here we find that, with the exception of Mewar and Partabgarh (decreases 40% and 41% respectively) Bikaner, Jaisalmer and Marwar were hit the hardest, and that the 1901 Census showed decreases in their numbers by 30%, 38% and 28% respectively. Sheikawati was lucky, losing only 20% but this can be explained by the magnificent famine relief organized under Sir Swinton Jacobs.

What are we to make of this apparent inversion of the probable ?

Were we dealing with birth-rates instead of net increases, the matter would be simple, for it is a biological fact that, the worse and more dangerous the conditions humanity is exposed to, the higher the birth-rate. This is apparently nature's method of securing survival for her children and of off-setting the high mortality which bad conditions occasion. Or expressed otherwise, as it was recently, the people in that desert zone west of the Aravallis have opportunities to pursue one hobby only—breeding. And for anyone interested in this subject it may be added that, from certain statistics published for the States in this group by Colonel A. Adams, it seems that the popular season for pursuit of this hobby as well as for burying a considerable proportion of the resulting progeny is the cold months of the year.

But considerations like these get us no nearer to solving this riddle of inversion. It would seem that we must try to trace some other influence or influences at work.

If we examine closely population figures for the integral components that go to make up this Western Group, we find that it is Bikaner State which contributes chiefly to the increase which is so puzzling. And when one speaks of Bikaner, one's thoughts travel immediately to one man, who has been the embodiment of all that Bikaner stands for during the last half century. That man is His Highness the Maharajah Sir Ganga Singhji Bahadur. It seems indeed that in this outstanding personality we find an answer to our riddle.

## V

IT IS INEVITABLE THAT SOONER OR LATER the question should be raised whether the province is over-populated or is likely to become so in the near future. Our attempt to answer it can conveniently be made at this point, but please note that the operative word in the last sentence is "attempt."

From time to time it has been said that one of the duties of a government is to calculate the optimum population for the country it rules, and then to take steps to bring its population up or down to that optimum. This sounds pretty good, as our American friends would say, but unfortunately as yet no statistician has arisen who can suggest a formula for computing the optimum. It would be idle therefore to speculate about an optimum population for Rajputana and Ajmer-Merwara.

It may be argued that any discussion as to over or under-population involves some concept of an "optimum." That of course is

true ; but since we cannot determine this factor, we must, perforce, approach the target from some safer angle.

What are the recognized signs of over-population ?

It is generally agreed that where rising birth and death-rates, unemployment and a decreasing standard of living are to be found, there it can be assumed that the population has increased beyond the country's ability to nourish it.

Let us apply these tests to Rajputana and Ajmer-Merwara.

Birth-rates, as far as records exist—and it has to be admitted that they are most unsatisfactory—show no sign of exceptional increase. Death-rates, again judged by the very inadequate vital statistics available, have no marked trend up or down. But the not inconsiderable increase in population over the last ten years as disclosed by the 1941 Census, despite severe famine conditions, finally clinches the matter : or else that increase could not have occurred.

But are the population figures of 1941 reliable ?

The answer to this last question is definitely in the affirmative—within a quarter of a million or so. Many tests have been applied but, in the writer's considered opinion, there emerges no single good reason to doubt their general correctness. A few complaints were reported that a family or person had been left out of the count, but inquiry usually showed them to be baseless.

In one case, however, an enumerator did plead guilty to having failed to record a high official. His excuse was: "My lord, you are known all over India."

Where figures may not be so reliable is in respect of the net increase over the last fifty years. With each census the people are less averse to being enumerated, and the organization improves. In earlier censuses there was probably considerable under-estimation. The change-over in 1941 from the system of a one-night count to an enumeration which extended over a period of ten days, but which was related finally to one central date (March 1st), was a notable step forward towards greater accuracy. The smiles at meetings, which greeted any reference to what occurred on that cold, wet night of 1931, left no doubt that on that occasion not a few enumerators had resorted to guess-work from the warmth of their beds, only getting up early next morning to hand in their returns in the expectation of rewards for prompt submission.

One last point may be mentioned. The suggestion recently made freely that one large State at least deliberately returned in 1941 inflated figures for political reasons contains, in the writer's considered opinion, no basis of truth whatever: it may be dismissed as ignoble as well as false.

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These matters disposed of, let us return to the other accepted indications of over-population.

The next point to be examined is evidence for unemployment. Here we find what constitutes apparently a serious state of affairs,

which will have to be dealt with at some length later in this essay. It will be sufficient for our immediate purpose, to state that unemployment in this province is almost wholly an urban problem and hardly exists in rural areas. Nor is there any appreciable evidence of drift to the towns from the villages or of any considerable exodus from the rural areas to other parts of India, either or both of which would be evidence of too great pressure on the land.

There remains, then, only to consider whether there are signs of a decreasing standard of living. Here again conditions in urban and rural areas must be examined separately.

Figures to support this belief cannot be produced, but there are good reasons for believing, that among urban families, members of which cannot find employment, the standard of living is decreasingly low and their condition often pitiable.

Concerning the villages, let it be at once said, that one can hardly pick up a book or journal on India nowadays which does not make great play with such phrases as "India's starving millions". Various agencies are held to be responsible for this state of affairs, but the most popular one at present seems to be the British raj. We have no concern here with politics, but it may be stated in passing that the average Britisher is probably quite content to leave his country's work in India to the judgment of history. It has been admitted that unemployment and consequent ill-nourishment are prevalent in most towns. But who, except in famine times, has seen a starving or even nearly-starving cultivator or his family?



The writer has spent some twelve years in various parts of Rajputana and can state, with little fear of being contradicted, that he always has had a genuine affection for and interest in the peasantry. Yet he has to admit that he has never seen these hordes of starvelings. Nor has anyone else whom he has challenged.

The simple truth is that, barring famine times, there are no "starving millions" except in the prejudiced imaginations of some inaccurate writers on the subject. Even in famine time cases of starvation are becoming rare due to better and more readily available famine relief schemes made possible by better communications. Such cases as are found are usually those of persons who, from a false sense of pride, refuse famine relief on the ground that it savours of charity.

But here, before someone, who disagrees violently, goes to fetch a gun, fuller explanations of this last statement had better be given, even though it involves a somewhat lengthy digression.

There is a vast difference between starvation and a poor standard of living. The first kills; the second merely reduces the ability to work long and arduous hours. Inefficiency in labour is not due to simple rations, but to ignorance or to ill-health or both. Nor are signs of malnutrition a safe test for over-population, since these exist in certain classes all over the world. If there was a connection, then we should have to admit that the whole world was over-populated and had been for thousands of years. Malnutrition probably is due far more to maldistribution of wealth than to over-population.

So, it comes to this then. It is totally misleading to compare the daily menus, either as regards quantity or quality, of one country with those of another where conditions are entirely different. It is not possible to state that the Bajra and Gaja standard is necessarily inferior to the Bread-and-cheese standard, or even the Beef-steak standard. Nor can we judge by money standards entirely. Farmers, in respect of their own diets, are not much affected by high or low prices. They grow their own food, and the farmer, who sells or barter his own food crop without keeping an adequate supply for his annual family nourishment is rare, to say the least. In appraising the real significance of matters like these a certain sense of realism is indispensable. Nor must we lose sight of the historical perspective.

No one will deny that the people in rural Rajputana live on a very simple diet ( Bajra, Mot, Gaja and a little ghee or curds ). The only question that arises is whether this gives them sufficient strength and nourishment for the work they have to perform. Considering that most of them work only some four months out of twelve, and that their hardest work is a few days' ploughing a year, which they can do with one hand as compared with 365 days' labour per annum, dawn to dusk, and ploughing with both hands till the shoulders are nearly wrenched out, which is the lot of farmers in most other lands, the answer is, of course, that their diet is sufficient for the work they have to perform.

As for signs of a decreasing standard of living there are none, at any rate in rural areas.

The people eat—the works of early writers attest this—precisely what they ate five hundred, perhaps a thousand years ago, both as regards quality and quantity. If they lack anything that their ancestors enjoyed in the dim past, it is milk. For this they have to blame their reverence for the bull and cow. However meritorious this belief, its effects have been disastrous—nothing less than the killing off of good grasses, soil-erosion on a gigantic scale due to overstocking and over-grazing, and the breeding up of millions of the poorest cattle to be found anywhere in the world. It is said of ancient India that it was blessed with rivers of milk: all the cows in Rajputana to-day could not fill one small brook.

It may be argued that, if the peasants had more to eat, they could work harder and earn more. Actually, the proposition stated thus is putting the cart before the horse. Yet, even expressed in more logical order, it ignores two tremendous factors—the limits imposed by nature, and the effect of climate upon the people. We must now consider these.

Dr. Gyan Chand in his admirable book "India's Teeming Millions" had made the following observation: "There is no denying the fact that a country has to come to terms with nature, whether bountiful or niggardly, and the bargain which it strikes must be a limitation which it cannot transcend for the ordering of its life." These are wise words, which Rural Uplift fanatics too often ignore. Every scheme for village betterment should be preceded by a survey of the limitations which the locality sets, and, these determined, the scheme should be restricted accordingly.

Now, as it has already been noted, this province is by no means homogeneous. The remarks which follow as to the limitations set by nature refer mainly but not exclusively to the Western Group, the desert area : those on climatic effects, however, apply to all.

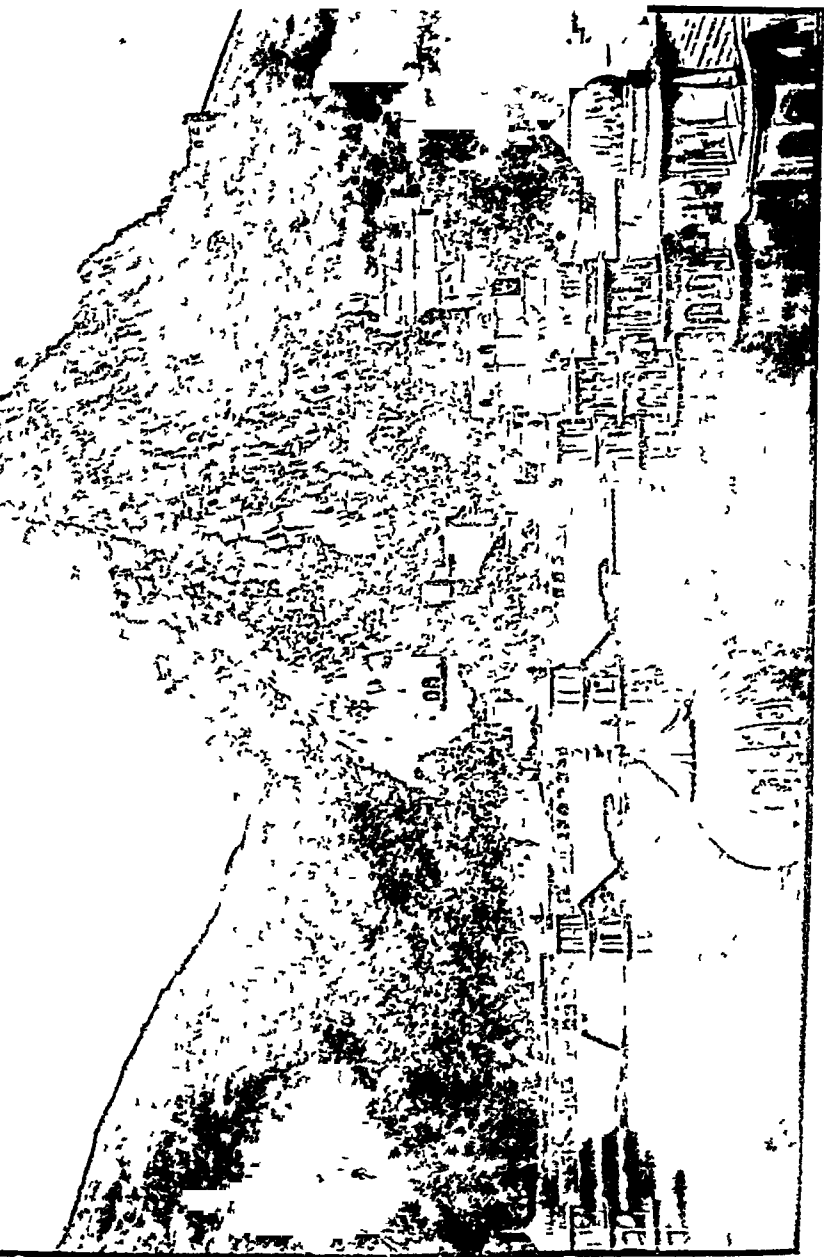
Over the whole of Jaisalmer and in parts of Bikaner and Marwar the rainfall scarcely averages seven inches in a year. Farther East, in Sheikawati, if thirteen inches fall in twelve months the year is regarded as a good one. Then, the period of the early monsoon showers is so short that only a small acreage can be ploughed up. If sowing is delayed by extensive ploughing, the seed has to be sown in a soil already too dry and bad germination results. Irrigation from tanks or canals hardly exists except in the Ganga Canal area of Bikaner, and irrigation from wells is seldom a paying proposition due to the depth at which water is found and the consequent time taken to lift it.

The soil is light, sandy and lacks humus. It is, however, surprisingly fertile when sufficiently moistened, but local experience avers that it will not stand up to heavy cropping : that every field should lie fallow for two out of three years is the belief of the farmers. And hereby hangs a tale.

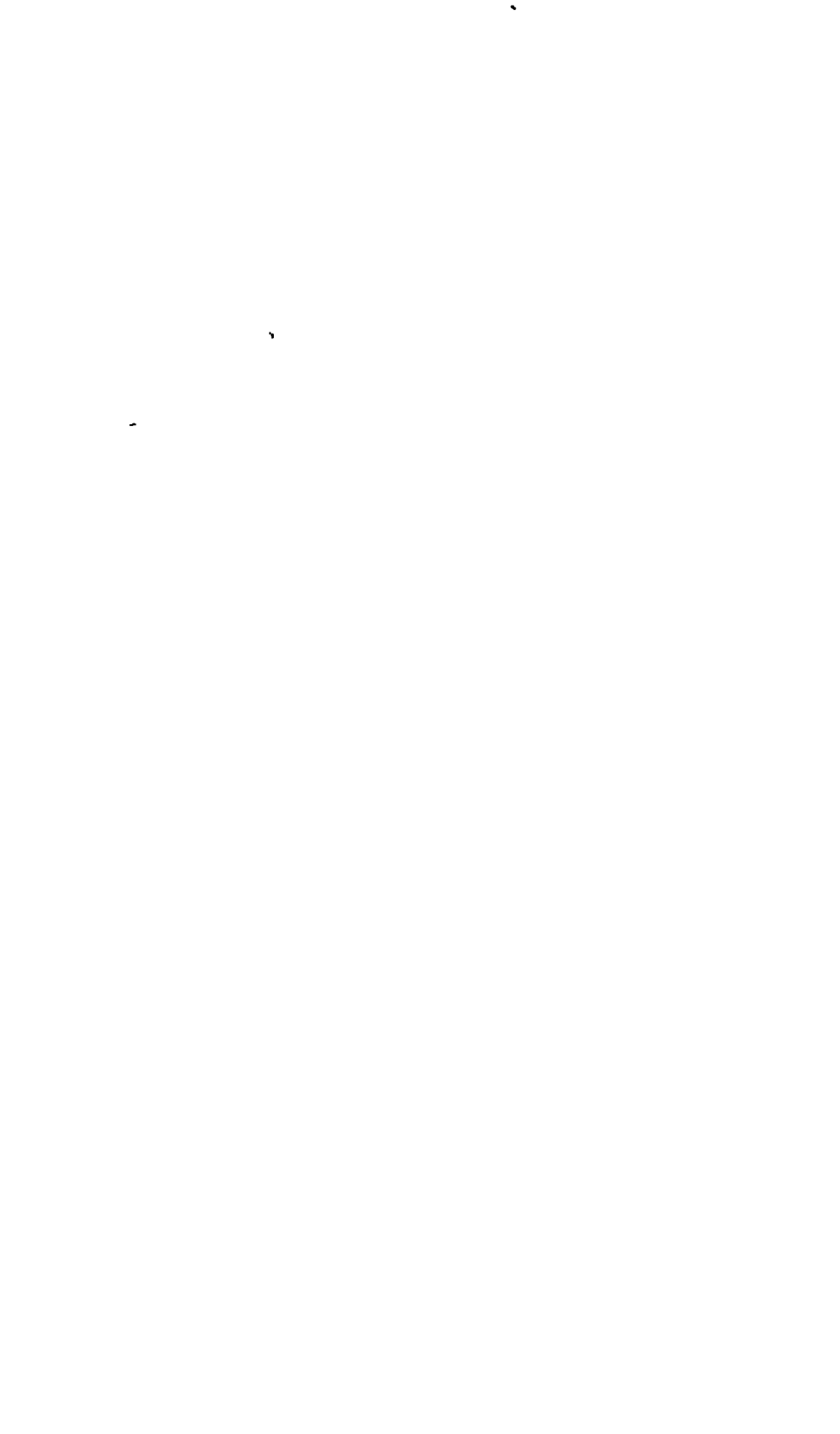
Everywhere in this desert area there is a great dearth of wood for fuel. Consequently the people rely on dung-cakes for heating and cooking. Outside almost every peasant's cottage is to be seen a "prandani," a stack of dung-cakes. Animal droppings are farmers' gold, and their diversion to fuel robs the land of that essential

source of renewal, which nature provides as a return for what has been taken out of the land by cropping. That in parts of this country at least there once existed forests seems clear. In the "Aini-Akbar", for instance, mention is made that the Emperor kept the Fatehpur forest (near Sikar) as a lion hunting reserve. The trees in that jungle nowadays are so sparse, dwarfed and so few in number that it is a misnomer to term it a forest at all. This and other suitable areas cry aloud for re-establishment, and their rulers would do well to remember the French proverb: "Un peuple sans forêts est un peuple qui meurt." (A people without forests is a dying race.)

There is another item of interest concerning the soil in these parts. Thousands of acres are covered with sand-dunes, known locally as "tibba." Most settlement officers and farmers from other lands would class these as waste lands. Certainly the writer did so at first, but later discovered his mistake. In a year of normal rainfall these sand-dunes, if sown, produce far better crops than do the ordinary fields. It took the writer some time to discover the explanation. Apparently it is this. For some weeks each hot-weather the "loo," cyclonic winds and precursors of the monsoon, sweep across the country. In their course they pick up dried droppings of animals, leaves and other vegetable products, and deposit them on the sides of the dunes. These provide fertilizer and humus to these hillocks, which have an added advantage for plants in that they are loose and yielding, so that the young roots can push down deep into the soil. Surely this points to a moral?—



Sagar Lake—Alwar State.



that if \*subsoiling (say, once every four years by tractors) was practised and humus was added to the soil, then the yield of these desert lands could be greatly increased. This, of course, is by the way, though it perhaps constitutes a pardonable digression.

Another feature of this part of the world is that there is nothing answering to the †'pastures' which one usually associates with a farming country. It is true that to each village is attached, as a rule, a considerable tract of what is called 'grazing land,' but this is merely a courtesy title. During the short period of the rains these lands provide a little grazing, but this is nibbled down to the root by hungry cattle almost as soon as it appears. For the rest of the year the cattle live on dried leaves that fall from the trees, or, if in milk and therefore valuable, they may be fed on a fodder consisting of the dried leaves of the 'Kejra' tree and camel-thorn shrub, and stalks of Bajra, Mong or other crops grown. So acute is the fodder question each year that fields are not kept clean: the weeds indeed are almost as valuable as the crops themselves, but—and this will easily be appreciated—the crops suffer greatly from unfair competition. Such circumstances, of course, preclude all serious forms of dairy-farming in these areas.

And now we are in a position to appreciate the hardness of the bargain that the people living in a very large area of Rajputana have had to

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\* This is now being tried out in Bikaner State and the results are reported to be excellent

† The writer feels convinced that if the Sewan grass found in Jaisalmer State were to be established widely in all the dry areas, then the situation would be revolutionized. This grass is drought-proof, of excellent feeding value and thrives in a rainfall of about 7 inches or less



come to with the niggardly nature which surrounds them. It may be stated concisely thus. They can grow only a limited number of types of crops; the area they can plough is small since the ploughing season is short; they are precluded from serious dairying and allied branches of farming since there are no pastures and insufficient time to grow fodder crops. In fact, with the exception of a few luckier persons, who can plant small plots around wells and keep them watered therefrom, all the rest must confine their farming activities to about four months in each year.

Such is the bargain they have struck with nature, and the picture is not over-drawn. Still, one would think that a people so situated, if they had any ambitions at all, would not be content to sit down under it: they would find *some* means of employing usefully that two-thirds of each year now wasted. Quite so, except that in agreeing to this we are forgetting that other factor mentioned—the effect of climate.

## VI

IN STUDYING THE EFFECT OF CLIMATE UPON the peoples of Rajputana (what follows is equally applicable to most other parts of India also) let us accept as axiomatic that Aryan Indians and Britons came originally from a common stock. One part went north to a cold and energising climate, the other south to a hot and enervating climate. Incidentally, it would seem to follow that the energy of our common ancestors was possibly less than that of Britons who went north, and more than that of Indians who went south.

Now, when a people leave the land that cradled and bred them, and migrate to live in a completely different climate what happens to them? Some very interesting research work on this subject has been done.

Climate exerts three distinct types of influences. In the first place it has a direct effect upon man's health and activity. Second, it has a strong indirect, but immediate effect through food and other resources, through parasites and through mode of life. Third, by its combined direct and indirect effects in the past, it has been a strong factor in causing racial mixture and natural selection. Thus it has had a powerful effect upon inheritance.

It is a fact beyond dispute that Europeans, who spend long years in India, leave it with impaired health and energy. Only by long periods of leave to Europe can they, as a rule, complete their service. The writer has studied the subject also in South Africa and has noted there as in India a certain apparent deterioration of European stock as a consequence of climate.

Race deterioration among Aryan stock in Africa is chiefly noticeable in a decline in efficiency, energy and character. The brain and physique do not appear to be affected in the same way. This, it seems, is also true for India, since many fine physical types are to be found there, and the brains of Indians are admittedly of a high order. There seems to be a very close correspondence between historic events and climatic vicissitudes. A people who migrate to and continue to live in a climate not as suitable to them as the one in which they were cradled, may be expected in time, through lack of energy, to get poorer; and it is possible almost to plot

the connection between economic distress thus engendered and political discontent and upheaval which follow. Conversely, it would appear that any people, who rise to a high condition of well-being, enjoy a climate which is suitable to them.

Another interesting factor, though for Rajputana and many other parts of India an adverse one, is this.

In the west, where energy is to be found at its highest, the order of the seasons is as follows: Winter; Spring; Summer; Autumn. The cold of winter is the season during which stores of energy are built up. Winter in western lands is followed by spring and summer, the agricultural seasons, when the energy stored up during the winter can be put to good use. Further, the summer is not so hot as to make people disinclined to work or to make it impossible to grow crops.

Now turn to Rajputana, where the position is radically different.

The busy agricultural time here is the monsoon season and the few months that follow it. But the monsoon season follows immediately after the hot weather, when stores of energy are depleted to their lowest level. Then comes the cold weather, which over most of the country fails dismally to serve its purpose of vitalising and energising (and incidentally provides the exception to the generally accepted theory that frost and enervation are mutually repellent) because the people have long ago lost the stamina to enable them to stand up to its rigours. All their energy goes in keeping themselves alive, and, if any is left over, the hot weather sets in to sap it.

The writer has never yet seen these considerations referred to elsewhere, but he suggests that they *are* factors, and important ones, which should not be overlooked. Possibly science will one day be able to suggest some way to make the cold weather in Rajputana a time of joy and bodily well-being; a time in fact when new waves of energy can be put to good productive use. At present, for most of the people, the cold weather is merely a time of misery and shivering, of sitting over smoky fires, or of huddling up in rooms without ventilation in an effort to keep warm. A time, in fact, of rotting instead of ripening.

Doubtless something some day will be done in this direction, but nothing, except a providential change in the cycle of the seasons, can alter the fact that our agriculturists (the vast majority of the population) are called upon to make their maximum effort when their vitality and energy are at their lowest.

Well, we cannot change the climate or seasons of Rajputana, and we cannot put Aryan Indians back into the land that cradled them, if only for the simple reason that they have far outgrown that land. So it follows that, as far as the human element here is concerned, we must accept, in all things where physical energy is concerned, the present pace of Rajputana will continue much as now, and that what in other countries would be regarded as chronic under-employment will remain as a normal feature. In short, most of the people of Rajputana, and also of India as a whole, have become steeped in an indifferentism, which is rooted in a physical fact—the climate. Theirs is not a working life, in fact, but rather an

existence moving sometimes hopefully, sometimes doubtfully through the years.

One last point remains—disease.

No one, it is thought, is likely to quarrel with the statement that Rajputana, compared with most other parts of India, is healthy. In the cities and towns, of course, can be found all those diseases associated with over-crowding and bad sanitary conditions. In the rural areas, however, there are, broadly speaking, only two common forms of sickness which afflict the people. They are malaria and guinea-worm, and both are usually widespread after the monsoon breaks and when everyone is busiest. This fact constitutes a grave indictment against the various governments in the province, for, without any great effort or outlay, both these scourges could be abolished in a few years, to the great benefit of both governments and people. The annual monetary loss occasioned by malaria and guinea-worm probably amounts to many lakhs of rupees.

Visible indications, of what at times are thought to be malnutrition, are more probably due to the presence of deleterious minerals in the drinking water than to faulty diets. A very little outlay would remedy this. And, where and if genuine malnutrition exists, a campaign, designed and carried out with energy and determination to encourage the growing of dhal and soya beans, could quickly eliminate it. The trouble in Rajputana is that so few people in authority seem to have the driving power requisite to take these matters up—further proof, if any were needed, of the spirit of indifferentism mentioned above.

## VII

THE READER MAY WELL BE ASKING BY NOW when he is going to get an answer to his question as to whether there is over-population or signs of it in Rajputana. The reply is that all these interludes, however disturbing to the narrative they may appear, are in reality relevant to the main issue..... And there still remains one more, an important one, to be considered. It is density of population.

The term 'density' means the average number of people who inhabit each square mile of the province. Generally speaking it is safe to say that a scanty rainfall means a scanty population. Thus we find that Jaisalmer with its annual rainfall of 6 to 7 inches supports only 5 persons to the square mile, whereas Bharatpur with 23 inches of rain has a density of 291 persons, the highest of any State in Rajputana. On the other hand, those States and Districts with the highest rainfall have by no means the greatest density. For instance, Jhalawar with the (for Rajputana) record rainfall of 37 inches is tenth in order of density of population, and Danta with 30 inches supports only 90 persons to the square mile. In fact rainfall and density can only be related with caution, the nature of the terrain, whether hilly or open; the soil, fertile or poor; and the type of inhabitant, agricultural class or jungle Bhil, being greater factors in the determination of closeness of settlement.

Considering density in relation to the Natural Groups mentioned at an earlier page, we find, as we might expect, that the States in the Eastern Group have the highest density (177 to the square mile), the Western (desert) Group

the lowest (63) and the Southern Group 147. The interesting point to note is that the Southern Group, despite having the higher average rainfall, has a density of nearly 30 persons per square mile less than the Eastern Group, where the land suitable or available for agriculture is greater in proportion to the area of each State in the Group.

Among individual States, Dungarpur supplies the surprise. Despite the fact that the State is hilly and largely inhabited by primitive tribes, it has 188 persons to the square mile, or 42 more persons per square mile than Mewar, its neighbour which is a more open land. It now stands sixth in order of density in Rajputana. The explanation lies in the fact that the population of Dungarpur over the last half-century has relatively been showing a more steady increase than Mewar and many of the States. And since its area has not increased, its density must necessarily do so.

At last we are in a position to attempt to answer the question about over-population, but once again, please note that the verb used is 'attempt.' As Bishop Butler wrote: "Probability is the guide of life." We cannot find out what *will* happen. We may by thought or investigation learn what is *likely* to happen. Or, as Clerk Maxwell put it: "The calculus of probabilities is the only mathematics for the practical man."

We have seen that in the rural areas none of the accepted signs of over-population are yet visible, unless it be the excess of \*emigration over immigration, a condition which may point

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\* The 1931 Census Report shows the excess of emigrants over immigrants for Rajputana and Ajmer-Merwara to be a little over half a million. Owing to partial restriction of operations in 1941, the corresponding figure for that year cannot be given

to the existence of over-population yet contains in itself a remedy for that ill. We have seen also that where density is greatest (Alwar, Bharatpur and Dholpur) the increases in population during the last half-century have been, generally speaking, the lowest. This represents a healthy state of affairs. On the other hand, we have found good reasons for assuming that famines in future, however bad, will never again reap the ghastly harvest they did previously. We can thus expect a \*decennial increase somewhere about that of the last twenty years, i.e., in the neighbourhood of two millions every ten years. Such an addition to the population, unless timely steps for development of opportunities to earn are taken, will, by the calculus of probabilities, lead to considerable over-population and consequent distress both in rural and urban areas. Obviously the way to meet this future danger is to plan ahead, and here we have the inspiring example of Bikaner. He would be bankrupt of all imagination who would suggest that what has been done in that State cannot be repeated elsewhere. Science and engineering are ready waiting to be invited to solve difficulties which previously seemed insuperable, and the writer, for one, refuses to believe that these agencies are incapable of bringing to Rajputana the one thing which above all it needs—water. Finance

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\* Calculations based on comparisons of age-groups in 1941 and expectations taken from the Life Table constructed in 1931, suggested that the increase in 1951 will not exceed 10%. Another calculation based on the Fertility Tables also supports this view. As both these depend on doubtful age returns, their reliability is suspect. On the other hand the conditions which in 1931 gave rise to the 18% increase in 1941 are found to exist again in 1941 and may point to a similar increase in population in 1951.

† To this statement one exception must be admitted—Marwar. In that State recently a Committee of Enquiry, under the presidency of Sir William Stampe, has definitely proved the impossibility of providing irrigation either by surface canals or from underground water supplies. The problem, therefore, in that area seems insoluble.



need never stand in the way of instituting sound and beneficial public schemes.

In urban areas signs of over-population are already pushing up their ugly heads, and, unless something is done and done quickly, the situation is certain to deteriorate even further. A scheme for industrialization could presumably meet this, but even then the chances that industry would absorb those now unemployed in towns, would have few chances of success unless and until educated youth gives up the ridiculous notion that the proper reward for matriculating or for getting a degree is quill-driving in an office. The imbecility of this idea is obvious, one would think, but, if it is not, we might invoke the aid of propaganda, the most powerful instrument yet devised by man, and one that properly (and even improperly) used can work miracles.

Finally, it is the duty of Census departments to gather information and even possibly to suggest their message. But it is upon the various Governments, which set up these departments of inquiry, that the burden rests for taking timely \*action where danger signs exist. Mr. Maynard Keynes in a pregnant phrase said: "Men will not always die quietly." His warning applies to many countries, and among them India.

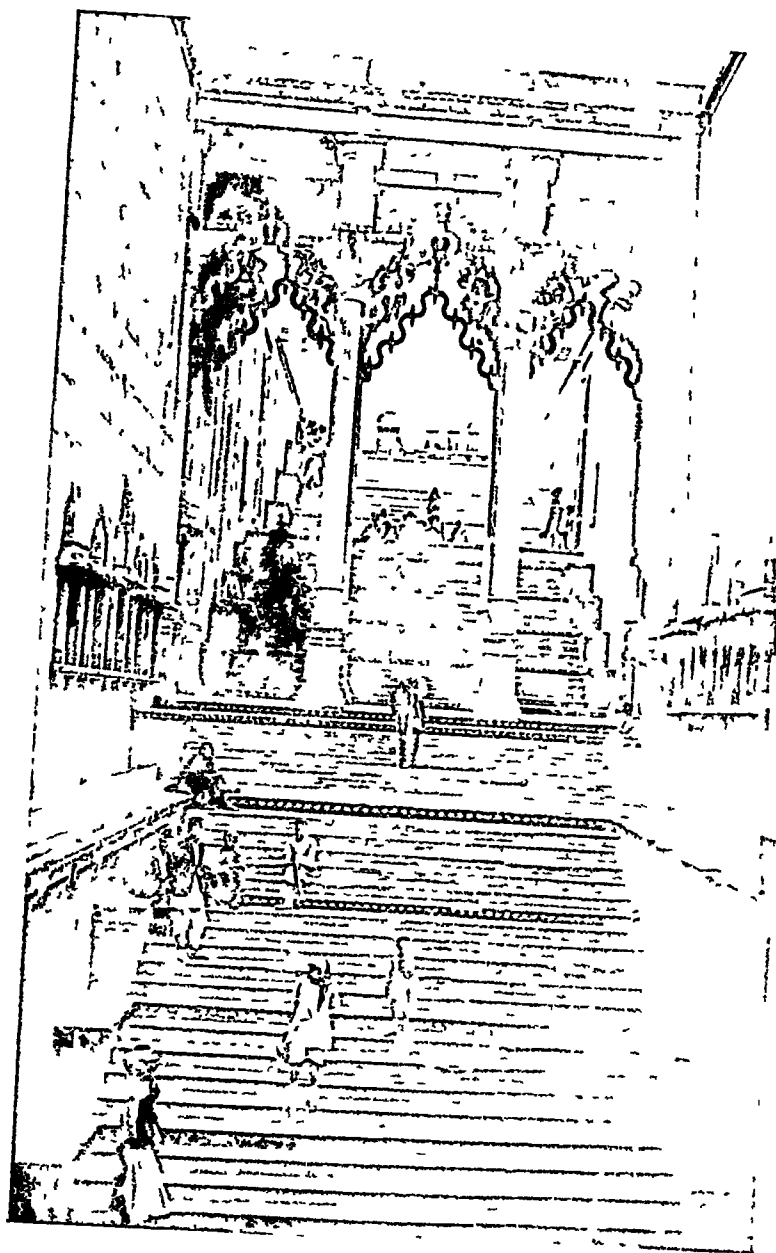
And with this mournful and slightly mocking quotation we bring to an end the first of our tours.

## VIII

OUR NEXT TOUR IS DESIGNED TO ACQUAINT US with what in recent years has been happening in Ajmer-Merwara and the various States of the Agency.

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\* The possibilities of setting up birth-control clinics is hardly worth considering in a province so backward medically and educationally.



Rani Ki Baori—Bundi State



The writer has found it no easy matter to decide how much statistical information to include in this section and how much to omit. Obviously some figures had to be given. In the end, rather than clog the text, he decided to add an appendix of useful facts concerning each individual District and State for the benefit of those who may feel that the diet provided here is too meagre.

### *ABU DISTRICT.*

The population of this small area of six square miles, leased by Government from the Sirohi Darbar, has shown the small increase of only 3 per cent. as compared with nearly 26 per cent. in 1931. This decline in increase of permanent residents is attributed to the fact that, since the last Census, the former practice, whereby the larger States maintained Vikalats with extensive staffs, has now been discontinued. In addition, the new system of recording persons at their usual place of residence has meant for Abu that the not inconsiderable number of labourers from outside areas, who daily go there for work, have not been included in the Abu population as they would have been in earlier censuses.

During the end of February and in early March, the time when the enumeration was made, the population of Abu was at its lowest level. In other months the population is increased to from anything between 500 and 800 by pilgrims and by students of the European Schools at Abu. The 'Season' commences in Abu on April 15th. From that date until July 15th, and again to a lesser degree from September 15th to November 15th, Abu is full

of visitors from the plains escaping from the rigours of the hot weather. At such times, another 1,500 and 1,000 respectively may be added to the resident population. The number of third class passengers carried between Abu Road and Abu during the nine months from April to December, 1940, exceeded 15,000. This gives one a fair idea of the size of the pilgrim traffic.

### *AJMER-MERWARA.*

This small British enclave has been further reduced since the last Census (1931) by the retrocession of 343 square miles of territory to the Mewar and Marwar Darbars. After allowing for these territorial changes, the population has increased by 15%. That this figure has been reached despite two years of scarcity and one of severe famine speaks well for the relief measures taken by the Administration to prevent mortality by privation. But for these measures 1939-40 might well have been as disastrous as the Chappania.

Of the total population of 584,000 about 36% live in Ajmer City or the towns of Beawar, Deoli, Kekri and the Nasirabad Cantonment. The remaining 64% live in the 706 villages. Ajmer-Merwara has increased in population by over 101,000 in fifty years. Considering that its area is a mere 2,400 square miles, this figure is highly satisfactory. Bikaner more than nine times as large has only increased by 461,000, Jaipur about six times as large by 217,000, and Mewar between four and five times as large by 166,000. Only little Dungarpur State has done better. There the increase has been 175,000 for an area of 1,460 square miles. Well done, Dungarpur!

In conjunction with the Census and Economic Survey, by a process known as Random Sampling, was made of the rural areas, and since some two-thirds of the people live in these areas, the information derived is both interesting and important. The data was collected by parties of senior students from various colleges and schools. It has since been tabulated, and it is intended that a detailed report shall be printed. Here are some of the points of interest that have come to light.

In the villages and hamlets practically everybody depends wholly or mainly upon agriculture: only a mere 15% do not grow crops or raise stock of any kind. Two years of scarcity were followed, in 1939-40, by a severe famine, but as has already been noted the toll in human life was negligible. Domestic animals on the other hand suffered greatly, the farmers' losses being as high as 60% of all their cattle. Among milch cows and buffaloes the losses were 63 and 56 per cent. respectively.

Conditions such as these are naturally reflected in the family budgets for the year. Everyone of these shows a deficit. Taking an average of all the budgets examined, the annual deficit per family works out at Rs. 82, not a very high figure perhaps, when we consider the severity of the famine they had passed through.

Examining these budgets in greater detail, we find that the tenant farmer, who relies *entirely* on agriculture, is not quite so well off as the tenant farmer who makes agriculture his main but not his sole occupation, or for whom agriculture is a subsidiary occupation. This incidentally is the writer's own experience of farming in South Africa: a small pension, a Company

Directorship or an Insurance Agency is a welcome adjunct to farming operations if the budget is to be balanced and something put away for a rainless day.

The average family income in the case of tenant farmers for the year under review was Rs. 170, as against expenditure of Rs. 293, leaving a debit balance of Rs. 123. Of income earned (Rs. 170) they spent Rs. 136 on food.

Agricultural labour families earned from Rs. 79 up to Rs. 116 according as they devoted all or part time to farming operations. Their budgets also showed small deficits averaging Rs. 28 and Rs. 16 respectively. Actually, looking to the size of labourer families, we find that they are slightly better off than tenant farmers, since their families are considerably smaller than those of the latter and their deficits are approximately one-quarter. And the reason for this seems clear.

Tenant farmers have some sort of security to offer and can command credit: the labourers have no security. So we find, when we examine the indebtedness per family, that the tenant farmers carry a burden of about Rs. 400 debt as against only Rs. 64 in the case of the purely agricultural labourer. The deduction to be drawn seems to be that they will not hesitate to borrow when a lender can be found.

Landlords of agricultural land, who depend entirely on their rents, had a particularly bad year. Their average income per family was less than their average expenditure by Rs. 1,945. Their average indebtedness is nearly Rs. 7,000, a fact which is not likely to contribute towards making them good landlords in the near future.

Where size of family is concerned the tenant cultivator has the largest one, averaging about five persons. The labourer restricts his to an average of under three persons. Where, however, the labourer makes agriculture only a subsidiary occupation, his average family rises to nearly five and a half persons, though data for his income and expenditure do not appear to warrant this extra burden on his resources.

Non-agriculturists in the villages seem hardly to have been affected by the famine, except possibly by a falling off of business, resulting in a small deficit on the year's working. This averaged Rs. 9 per family. These families, too, carry only the comparatively light average load of debt of Rs. 142, and this is attributable in most cases to expenditure on marriages and other social ceremonies.

An analysis of the average food consumption of an adult male in one year is most interesting. He eats approximately 9 maunds of cereals at a cost of Rs. 29·7. A further Rs. 6·7 is spent on spices, pulses, oils, etc., bringing the total expenditure up to Rs. 36·4 or approximately annas one and a half per diem. This sum may seem lamentably small to keep a man in health, but actually it is sufficient, since it provides him with 3044 calories a day, which exceeds by some 400 the amount which science prescribes as requisite for an adult human body.

The average adult's annual expenditure on clothing is Rs. 7·7.

### *THE RAJPUTANA AGENCY.*

This great tract of nearly 133,000 square miles supports now a population of a little over 13½ million people. The increase in the last



ten years has been slightly more than 2 millions, or about 18%. The Agency comprises twenty-three States, and contains 156 towns, 324,000 villages and over two million occupied houses. The net gain to the population over fifty years has been a little over one million persons.

The ratio of population increases in the various States has by no means been even. The highest increase is in Bikaner State (38%) and the lowest (excluding the tiny chiefship of Lawa where the increase has been less than 1%) Sirohi State (8%). No State has shown a decrease.

The notable and exceptional increase in the population of *BIKANER STATE* is due mainly, though by no means entirely, to the development of the Gang Canal area in the north of the State. The increase actually is a little less than that recorded at the Census of 1931: at that time it was 42%. The canal was completed in 1928, but in that year 7,000 bighas of land only were under irrigation. Each year since then the area has increased, till in 1940 there were no less than 764,000 bighas under cultivation. The canal, which claims to be the largest concrete-lined canal in the world, is 84 miles long. Feeder and distributory channels have a total length of over 600 miles.

Recently the writer made a three days' tour of this area, and since its opening marks for Rajputana such an inspiring page of history, a short digression to describe it is certainly excusable.

The first day was spent at Ganganagar, a well-built town with broad, tree-lined streets, green parks, busy shops, factories and a powerhouse, built on a site which fifteen years or less

ago had been bare, parched desert. A local Vishnoi, who had lived there all his life, moved by the noisy chattering of birds in the garden, related how years ago on the death of his father, when custom required the feeding of crows, not one of that usually ubiquitous tribe was to be found. So he fed the calf instead!

In the afternoon we motored some fifty miles through the surrounding country. We sped along a tree-rimmed road, past an Experimental Farm with its many greens of bajra, cotton and sugar-cane, till we struck one of the feeder canals. Later, seated on a bridge, we listened to the merry gurgle and swish of water as it poured into the arteries of this erstwhile desert—a veritable blood-transfusion from the living Punjab into the moribund \*Marudesh.

Then on again along a path that follows the canal throughout its length. Trees, trees, trees and Kus grass twelve feet high, and the shrill notes of green parrots competing with the strident voice of innumerable peacocks, all immigrants during the last few years. Lush grass grew in a seemingly endless ribbon on both sides of the flowing water, cropped by sleek barrel-bellied buffaloes. Little they recked that for ten months no rain had fallen on this land. And to right and left, as far as the eye could reach, field after field ploughed ready for or planted to grain, warranter that never again shall Bikaneries know the pangs of famine.

Next morning we took the train and voyaged over ninety miles of loop-line, which makes a wide sweep almost up to the Bahawalpur

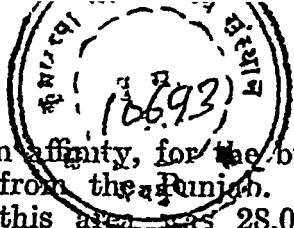
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\* This may be translated as "Deadlands", though some people would disagree with this and say it means the Land of Maru.

border. The engine, which had come through from the desert beyond, was patterned, on the windward side of its long boiler-casing, with clinging, tawny sand like some gigantic mustard-plaster. Every twenty-five miles or so we stopped to alight at some thriving little town, their markets piled high with the good things of the land awaiting transit. Most of these places bore the name of some former ruler of the State. And time and again we crossed feeder channels, veining the land in silver that glinted in the sun. Everywhere we saw happy bathers, splashing and rejoicing in an element known uneasily to their forebears as something to be prized above all else, and certainly not to be squandered in washing. Before the building of the canal, water often had to be fetched each day from fifteen miles away. Well may it have been true that in those days a peasant only had two baths in his life—one after his own birth and the other on the death of his father!

At Mohanagar the canal area came to an abrupt ending. Suddenly we found ourselves in a stretch of country untouched by man, grim, bare, thirsty. It seemed like waking from a dream to stark reality, and a mirage—lakes, islands and trees—was there to help the illusion. Over all the miles we saw but one sign of life—a camel-rider, his pagri bound over his mouth and nostrils to keep out the driving sand. The air grilled and bubbled with heat and spectacles put on scorched the flesh.

Nearly one thousand new towns and villages have sprung up along the banks of this canal. But, were one suddenly put down among them, none would guess the land to be Rajputana. The houses, the people, the very atmosphere,



all proclaim their northern affinity, for the bulk of the new settlers are from the Punjab. In 1921 the population of this area was 28,000. To-day it stands at a little over 260,000. Prior to 1850 it was practically uninhabited.

But, even if we were to exclude the canal zone, we should still find that the rest of the State tops the list in Rajputana for the greatest increase in population since 1931. The Suratgarh and Rajgarh Nizamats are steadily filling up, possibly in expectations of great prosperity when another and more ambitious irrigation scheme—the Bhakra Dam Scheme—comes into being. Then, Bikaner City has shot up by 48%, Napasar by 53%. Everywhere in Bikaner we find new life surging forward, and possibly not the least of the causes is the wise policy of the State in granting proprietary and occupancy rights to its peasants. The present population of the State is 1,293,000, showing a net increase of 461,000 in the last half-century.

*JAISALMER STATE* stands second in order of increase—22·3 per cent. How to account for this is not easy especially as the population of its capital has remained almost stagnant. A great deal, however, has been done by the present ruler to improve living conditions during the last quarter of a century. Old dams have been repaired, a large number of new wells have been sunk, tanks constructed and communications improved. All these factors may be presumed to have played their part. Yet the rainfall averages less than seven inches and, except in the two eastern administrative units of Bap and Nokh-Ranjitpura, cultivation is almost unknown. The main vocation of the people is cattle-breeding. They lead a semi-nomadic life,

moving to wherever 'Sewan' grass is to be found. This grass, it seems to the writer, is one of the most valuable dry-belt fodders that nature has contrived. It grows in stools, stands the severest drought-conditions, is a heavy yielder and makes excellent sweet hay of first class keeping qualities.

The explanation for the steady increase in population given by the State Census Superintendent is as follows:—

“The deficiency of rains is almost a normal condition. The pursuits, the avocations, the customs and the traditions of the people are such as may be calculated to obviate the possibility of any general or widespread distress owing to deficiency or failure of rain. The recuperative powers of the State and its people, that have lived for centuries past under such abnormal conditions, are enormous. One is seldom likely to find elsewhere such economic adjustment to surroundings as is seen in this State. This adjustment acts as a palliative, and modifies, almost nullifies, the effects of deficiency or failure of seasonal rain, which in other parts of the country, where the life of the people is not so well attuned, would result in serious and widespread distress. Deficient rainfall and consequent famines are hardly factors which might be calculated to accelerate death and thereby cause a permanent reduction in the population of this State.”

Nevertheless the writer is tempted to conclude that some part at least of the increase may be attributed to the energy and organizing ability of the State Census Superintendent for 1941. At the previous census the increase had been only 12%, and nothing of sufficient

import seems to have occurred in the following decade to explain the sudden jump up to 22 per cent.

Other States which have shown an increase of over 20 but under 22 per cent. are Kishangarh, Dungarpur and Partabgarh.

It is satisfactory to see the population of *KISHANGARH* creeping up again. Between 1881 and 1921 this State lost, from famines and epidemics, nearly half of its population. By 1931 its numbers were on the up-grade, a progress which recently has been accelerated. Yet still its population remains less by 21,000 persons than it was in 1891. It stands now at 104,000.

*DUNGARPUR* is one of the few States in the Agency which, since the Census was commenced, has shown a steady increase from decade to decade. In fifty years its population has risen from 98,000 to 274,000. The people are predominantly Bhil, a tribe which is markedly short-lived but amorous and prolific, believing at all times apparently in the motto—a short life but a gay one. As already mentioned, Dungarpur shows for the past half-century the greatest net increase per square mile of any State in the Agency, beating even Ajmer-Merwara.

*PARTABGARH* has made a sudden spurt up to 92,000 and now at last, after forty years, has slightly surpassed its numbers as recorded in 1891 before the Chappania famine killed off or drove permanently away two-fifths of its people. Over 40% of the people are Bhils.

The States which have shown a plus variation of 19% are three—Marwar, Mewar and Palanpur. After Jaipur *MARWAR* has the

second largest population of any State in Rajputana: it stands now at a trifle over  $2\frac{1}{2}$  millions, which is approximately what it was in 1891 before the Great Famine.

The increase in Marwar shows considerable unevenness from district to district. The little Hakumat of Pachpadra, for instance, now has 36% more people than in 1931. Malani district also shows the relatively high increase of 31%. These are precisely instances where census officers need to be watchful, if they would not mislead the Governments they serve. One can imagine the Educational and Medical departments of the State looking at these figures and planning to increase the numbers of schools and dispensaries in those areas. But the true facts of the situation belie these figures as having any more than transitory import. An examination of the situation revealed in both cases that the population had been *temporarily* enhanced by local migration due to uneven rainfall in the last year. Malani, for instance, had enjoyed a good monsoon in 1940, and many cultivators had moved over from the adjacent and rainless districts of Sanchoe and Sheo. At the time of the enumeration, March 1941, they had not returned to their homes, but probably did so a short while after.

Though Marwar has by far the largest area of any State in Rajputana—it measures 35,000 square miles—and though its population is half-a-million less than Jaipur, still probably no other State can look forward to a large increase in population with less equanimity. The reason, as has already been hinted in a footnote, is that Marwar, it would seem, must always remain a desert, dependent for its existence upon the



Chindrapuram Temple Jhalawar State





vagaries of a rainfall that throughout the centuries has proved itself most fickle. A geodetic survey shows that the State is surrounded on three sides by ridges on the earth's core, which preclude any possibility of water reaching these regions by means of underground rivers from the Himalayas. And in the only direction open for building a canal, the gradient is up instead of down. Truly a desperate state of affairs in a land where water and life are almost synonymous terms.

*MEWAR* is another large State (13,000 square miles), which may be said to have at last recovered from the devastating effects of the Great Famine. No State in Rajputana suffered greater loss of population from that dire event than did Mewar. By 1931 its population had struggled back to within one and a half lakhs of its pre-Chappania strength, despite another severe setback from malarial fever in 1908. Now in 1941 the net gain over fifty years works out at approximately 166,000.

*PALANPUR*, the last State in this variation group, has only recently been included in the Rajputana Agency. Though physically akin to adjoining or neighbouring Rajput States, in most other respects it has little or nothing in common with them, being Gujarati in language, outlook and manners. Making a quick recovery after the Great Famine, this State has shown a steady if not spectacular rise in numbers. To-day its population in round figures is 316,000, with a net increase over fifty years of 40,000 persons. The writer spent many of the early years of his service in this State. Its climate is probably the hottest in Rajputana, and on one occasion, he remembers, the temperature

rose to 121°, and at 3 a. m. still stood at 112°. But his abiding impression of Palanpur is : a really happy State.

*BHARATPUR STATE* up to 1931 alone of all States returned a steady decline in population at each census. Now in 1941, for the first time, it has shown an increase (18%), but is still about 60,000 below the figure for 1891. The present population in round figures is 580,000. Yet, despite their losses, Bharatpur has always and still remains the most densely populated State in Rajputana (291 persons to the square mile). It is not easy to account either for the persistent decrease in the past or the present increase. Famine and plague have been blamed for the latter, but then these afflicted other States too, but with results far less drastic. It would seem that other factors must have been at work, and once again one is tempted to correlate here as elsewhere the influences of government, good, bad or indifferent, with the condition and number of its subjects.

Five States show an increase of between 15 and 16 per cent. They are Banswara, Bundi, Danta, Jaipur and the Chiefship of Kushalgarh.

*BANSWARA*, except for its loss of 31,000 people in the Great Famine, has steadily been growing in population during the last fifty years. The present figure is 259,000, an increase of nearly 34,000 since 1891. About 65% of the people are Bhils. They continue to live, as from earliest times, a simple unspoiled life, close to nature, deep in the jungles that are the special features of this State. One of the writer's happiest memories of India will always be a journey he made by car from Banswara to Partabgarh. The way lay through the heart

of the forests, along narrow paths that wound over spurs, along valleys and across the rocky beds of many a hill-stream. The noonday sun blazed overhead, but so tall, so thick-set grew the trees that one travelled for miles in almost complete shade. Here and there, tucked away in a glade, was the little, simple home of a Bhil, peaceful, solitary, inviting. with a happy, smiling family sitting by its door, and perhaps a small boy, hardly more than a toddler, practising with his bow, and fat cattle grazing around. Then, later, out on to rolling grasslands, deep in grass. And the thought came at once: What a wonderful dairying district this could make!

It is not easy to say why it should be so, but the word which most people instinctively associate with *BUNDI* is romantic: certainly Kipling did so, and many other and less gifted writers and scribblers. Perhaps it is due to the striking approach to the capital from the north—by a pass that narrows almost to a ravine, on the sides of which nestles the city and above which hangs the fort and palace. Over the city and the country around rests an old-world air—a breath of the past untainted by railroads, hardly perturbed by the march of time. Yet despite its usually ample rainfall, high water level and good soil, and despite (or perhaps because of) its lack of contact with the world, its population has in fifty years decreased and to-day is less by 46,000 than it was in 1891. The Great Famine reduced it by nearly half, but many must have survived to return, for the 1911 census showed an increase over 1901 of nearly 48,000 persons. Still the signs are of a steady, if not ample, decennial increase, and the portents are that by 1951, the population will be

back to normal again. The present figure is 249,000. Almost certainly the reason why Bundi supports a density of only 113 per square mile as compared with 136 in Kotah, which adjoins it, is that, of the 2200 square miles of its area, a large portion is uncultivable, being a mass of low hills and scrub jungle.

*DANTA* has an area of only 347 square miles and the low density of 90 persons per square mile. Like Palanpur it has been included in the Rajputana Agency after 1931. It is a State of a thousand hills; has little cultivation and depends for its revenues chiefly upon the sale of bamboos from its extensive jungles and the tolls paid by pilgrims to the ancient temple at Shree Mataji. The people are predominantly Bhil. The present population is 31,000. How this compares with the past it would be rash to say, for sleepy little Danta generally forgot Census day in the past, and, when it woke up, made a rapid but hardly accurate count of heads! But anything can be forgiven Danta: it is quite the most charming and disarming little corner to be found in Rajputana.

Danta has no railways (thank God!) and the drive from Abu Road to its capital, Danta Bhawangadh, is not easily forgotten. Very soon the road enters the hills, and thereafter, for many miles, it is a switch-back in two dimensions—sideways and up and down—twisting like a serpent as it follows the valleys over narrow little bridges spanning innumerable water-courses. The valleys and the lower slopes of the hills are well wooded and bamboo clumps numerous, but recent scarcity of rains have taken, it is said, a terrible toll of these forests.

Few people or inhabitants are to be seen along the road. Those inhabitants met are chiefly Bhils, armed with bows and woodman's axes. One is tempted to play truant and go a-hunting with them: or seized at least by an urge to become possessed of a bow and sheaf of arrows. The writer felt the urge irresistibly and so, apparently, did Sir Arthur Lothian, the Hon'ble the Resident, for just after a visit to Danta, the writer found him shooting at a steel-helmet in the Residency with a Bhil bow and a grand assortment of arrows.

The road passes through Shree Mataji, recognized as a town but having less than 800 inhabitants. Here annually a vast concourse of pilgrims gathers to worship Shree Krishna, who, legend says, was tonsured there. Shree Mataji was holy and famous long before the Parmar Rajputs, driven out by Mahomedan invaders, left Sind to find shelter and a new home in Danta.

Danta Bhawangadh is scarcely more than a hamlet nestling beneath the Rana's palace. It stands just below a high hill, at one side of a saucer-shaped valley and is almost entirely surrounded by hills. We drove to the Guest House which was dedicated to the writer's first political chief, Colonel H. D. Merewether. A marble inscription attests this fact. One wonders what archaeologists of centuries ahead will make of this remarkable inscription. Probably they will deduce that Colonel Merewether was a great military conqueror: actually he was the most peaceable of men. Or, if they find the mirror in the sitting-room, on which his name is recorded as Merry Weather, they may decide that the building was dedicated to the spirit of fine weather and the spelling on the tablet defective!

Sitting on the veranda of the Guest House on the next morning, the writer watched dawn strike through the hills. There was a sense of utter peace and joyful nearness to nature. Yet, he remembered, this mountain fastness has known days of bloody strife. May they never return !

*JAIPUR STATE* has had a  $15\frac{1}{2}\%$  increase in population. Despite the fact that it is fourth in size among the States of Rajputana, it contains by far the greatest population—3,041,000. Its area is 15,600 square miles and the density of population 195. The increase in the last fifty years has been nearly 217,000 persons. From 1901 to 1921 the population steadily declined: it is only during the last twenty years that an increase has been recorded. The State contains  $38\frac{1}{2}$  towns, (the 'half' is Sambhar which Jaipur shares with Marwar) and 5938 villages.

The percentages of increase in the various Nizamats and Thikanas of the State show considerable variation. Hindaun, for instance, has increased by 27%. On the other hand, Kot-Kasim shows a variation of only plus 8%, but this is more than double the increase recorded for it between 1921 and 1931. The present density of population in Hindaun is 314 persons per square mile, higher than the figure for any State in the Agency. An examination of the distribution of population between towns and villages shows only a slight change in the last ten years, the towns losing two persons in each 1,000.

Of the major Thikanas, Sikar recorded an increase of 21%, Khetri of 18% but Uniara of only 12%. Sikar was the scene in 1937 of an

outburst, fantastic enough in itself but painted infinitely more so by some of the European and American papers. Sikar and Khetri are in the Sheikawati Nizammat and within the western, dry area of the Agency.

The Jaipur State possesses the finest and greatest length of metalled road of any State in the Agency: the total mileage is 570. It also has 245 miles of railroad.

The *KUSHALGARH CHIEFSHIP* next calls for mention. In area it is about the same size as Danta, but has 293 villages as against Danta's 178. Its present population is 41,000 i.e., 10,000 more than Danta. On paper at least it shows a steady increase at each census during the last half-century. How far the early figures are correct, however, is difficult to gauge, since prior to 1911 the enumeration of Bhils, a large proportion of the population, was defective and largely guess-work.

We now have to consider a group of five States showing increases of population between 11 and 13%. They are Kotah (13.4%), Jhalawar (13.4%), Shahpura (12.6%), Dholpur (12.5%), and Tonk (11.4%).

*KOTAH* has at last recovered from the Chappania famine and for the first time returns a population higher than that of 1891. Its net gain in fifty years is 54,000 and its present population 777,000. The area of the State is 5714 square miles and its density of population 136. It possesses 5 towns and 2548 villages. The rainfall is regular and high, varying for the period 1931 to 1940 from 49 inches (in 1931) to 24½ inches (in 1939) the lowest recorded for the period. Watching the stream of foot-sore and



weary Marwaris returning *via* Kotah to their homes, after having taken their famine-stricken cattle in 1939 south for grazing, one wondered why they did not stop to settle in this far more favoured district.

*JHALAWAR* also has a relatively high and steady rainfall and its soil is good. Why like Kotah it should only have increased by 13·4% is due, it would seem, to the fact that in 1931 the ratio of children aged 0 to 10 years stood at the low figure of 286 per mille of the 1921 population. The equivalent ratio for 1941 has risen to 306, which augurs a little better for the future.

*SHAHPURA* is another very small State with an area of 405 square miles. It has only one town and 143 villages. Like a number of other States it has still not quite recovered from the Great Famine and its population (61,000) is approximately 2500 below the figure for 1891. Its density of population is 151 persons per square mile. Its rainfall for the past decade has been sufficient except in 1939, when it received only 8·8 inches of rain.

*DHOLPUR* has the distinction of being the State in which one person, asked his name in connection with the Census, gave it as George V. Another and more practical distinction is that its population has at last not only reached the 1891 level but passed it by 7000. In area it measures 1173 square miles, numbers 3 towns and 540 villages and has the second highest density, after Bharatpur, of 245 persons per square mile. Its present population is 287,000. In the 1911 Census Report it was mentioned concerning this State that an unsatisfactory feature in the figures was that the proportion of children under 10

years to the total population was still declining. In 1891 it was 26·2%, in 1901 25·3% and in 1911 24·2%. By 1931 the ratio had risen to 28% and this has been maintained in 1941. Judged from this standard then, we may expect at least an equal increase of population in 1951.

It's an ill wind that blows nobody any good, and a past failure of the rains in Dholpur has had one charming sequel.

Some years ago, when famine stalked the land, the present Ruler began to fear for the wild life of his jungles. So he laid a pipeline to the base of a cliff. Soon the good news spread among the jungle denizens that a spring of water had miraculously appeared. Now all could drink and live. Still better, piles of food, too, stood invitingly near the spring.

And from the incident, over the years has grown up between this Prince and his wild animals a friendship such as probably exists in no other place in the world. Each evening, when he goes out in his car, mighty antlered Sambhar stags, gentle hinds and fawns come from the forests to put their heads through the windows for fruit and bread and other tit-bits. As he moves off a herd of forty or more follow his car, completely fearless: yet none have ever known confinement. Other wild friends he has, too, this generous Prince—peacocks, partridges and one tawny-breasted Tree-pie, which flies down from some branch to feed upon his hand.

*TONK*, though recording an increase of 11·4 per cent. over the figures for 1931, is still 26,000 below the total for 1891. The present population is 354,000. It is a medium sized State of 2543 square miles and possesses 5 towns

and 1242 villages. Its density of population is 139 persons to the square mile. A glance at the map will show the scattered nature of its component parts, which lie at a distance from each other. Sironj and Chhabra are geographically in Central India, Nimbahera is almost surrounded by Mewar, and Pirawa by Jhalawar.

Four States remain—Alwar (9·8% increase), Karauli (8·5%), Sirohi (8%) and the Lawa Estate (0·6%).

*ALWAR* is a State which suffered surprisingly little from the ravages of the Chappania famine. In 1901, the first Census after the famine, the population stood at 61,000 higher than in 1891. The next twenty years, however, were a period of decline, due chiefly to migration from the State. In 1931 it showed a recovery and again in 1941 the population has shown the relatively small increase as stated above. The present figure is 823,000, a net gain in fifty years of 55,000. The State is 3158 square miles in extent, has 7 towns and 1767 villages. It has a density of 261 persons per square mile.

During the days of the actual enumeration, the writer arrived one morning in Alwar City. Imagine his delight when he found the Prime Minister of the State himself supervising the work there, and all the other Ministers out on tour and similarly giving the Census their personal attention.

*KARAULI* has the relatively small area of 1227 square miles, and its geography is such that two-thirds of the people live in one-third of the land, and the other one-third in the remaining two-thirds. There are 3 towns in the State and 364 villages. Average density is 124 persons

per square mile. The population now is 152,000, a figure which reflects a loss of 4000 persons over the past fifty years. Still, the increase of 1941, small as it must be reckoned, is nearly double that for 1931, and between 1901 and 1921 the population decreased by almost 23,000. In the past Karauli, it is believed, has lost cultivators to the neighbouring districts of Jaipur. It is a State which, even more than Bundi, wears an old-world air, and is ruled by a Prince of a type fast passing, whose gallant bearing, simplicity and courtly manners are reminiscent of the days of knightly chivalry described by Tod.

The *LAWA ESTATE* is so small (20 square miles) that it might be the subject of the story about the Rajput, who picked up his heritage on the end of his lance and rode off with it. It certainly is the subject of another and recent story, to the effect that the Census Superintendent enumerated the people of the estate from the luxury of a long chair set on the roof of his house! Whether this story is true or false, the writer does not know, but it emphasizes again the minuteness of the Estate with its 11 villages, 1 dispensary and 1 school. Apparently everything is small here, even the population increase (0.6%). The total population is 2800, a decrease of 552 over the last fifty years.

## IX

SO MUCH FOR THE DISTRICTS AND STATES themselves, and the writer apologizes if to his readers he may appear to have been suffering from "the disease of numbers". Figures, let it be agreed, have little beauty divorced from a salary bill. But how to do without them?

If only we could adopt the Indian way of avoiding them ! Then, instead of specifying a herd of, say, 101 cows, we could just write : Cows-wows.  
But to continue.

Let us turn now to a brief consideration of the chief cities and towns, leaving till later the not uninteresting subject of the distribution of the population between countryside and towns.

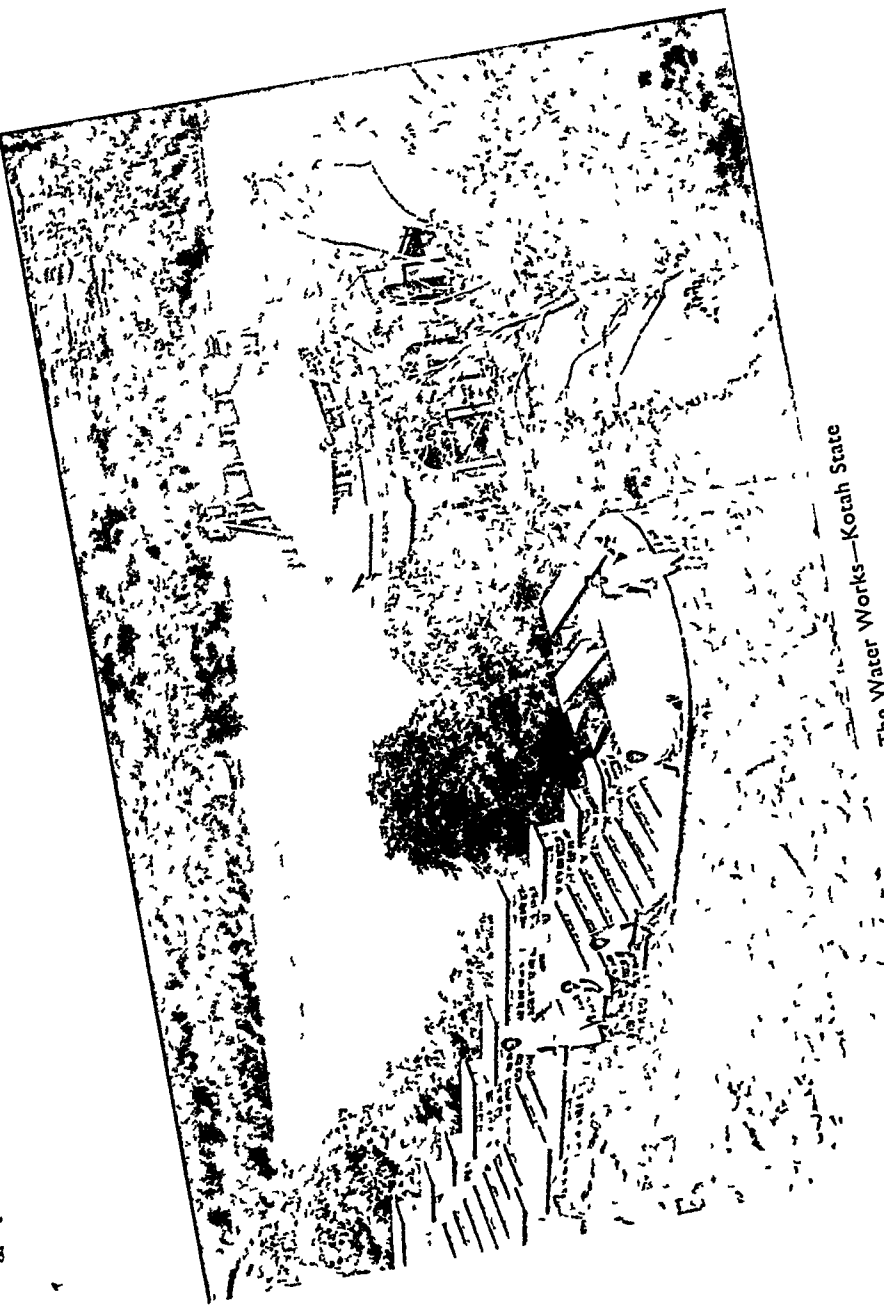
A 'City', according to the all-India definition should contain not less than one hundred thousand inhabitants. Judged from this standard there are only four cities in Rajputana and Ajmer-Merwara. They are :—Jaipur, Ajmer, Bikaner and Jodhpur.

To Bikaner City (127,200) must be awarded the palm for the greatest increase both in the last decade (41,000 or 48%) and also in the last fifty years (77,000). It has multiplied itself nearly four times within sixty years, and, at the moment, is preparing to stretch out further, with the aid of an ear-shattering tractor, which reduces bumps in the land and is playfully referred to as "Kestos."

Jodhpur City (127,000), too, has done remarkably well in the last ten years. Its present population is nearly 40% higher than in 1931, and the City had added 46,000 persons to its inhabitants over the past half-century.

Ajmer City (147,000) since 1931 has increased by only 23%. Still in thirty years it has grown by 61,000 persons.

Jaipur City (176,000) continues to hold the proud position of Rajputana's largest city. Its increase since 1931, however, is comparatively



The Water Works—Kotah State



low (16%), and in fifty years it has only managed to add 10,000 to its numbers. The years 1911 and 1921 were bad ones for it, the population declining by 17,000 and 23,000 respectively.

It is customary to praise the appearance of Jaipur City. Certainly this custom has more excuse than some, for in its general lay-out of broad streets, its many fine buildings and in its setting, it has indeed a noble countenance.

But Rajputana, in some respects, is a law unto itself, and rates ten more places as Cities despite their population being below one lakh. They are: Alwar (54,000), Bharatpur (36,000), Bundi (21,000), Dholpur (21,000), Karauli (19,000), Kishangarh (14,000), Kotah (45,000), Palanpur (22,000), Tonk (39,000) and Udaipur (60,000). Of these, Udaipur alone has had any very considerable increase since 1931 (30%). In other cases the increases vary from 15 to 20 per cent, but Dholpur and Palanpur have only gone up by 9 and 6 per cent respectively.

Towns, by the all-India standard, should, to be so classified, have a population of at least 10,000 inhabitants. Again Rajputana goes its own way (it was ever a lawless land!), and the reason, or part of it, we shall learn later.

Of the 149 recognized towns, nine have between 20 and 50 thousand inhabitants; twenty-eight between 10 and 20 thousand; eighty-two between 5 and 10 thousand, and the rest under 5000. Two indeed, Danta and Kushalgarh, have only 2300 and 3500 inhabitants respectively.

Among towns (not Cities) which are capitals of States, Sirohi shows the greatest increase (27.3%). It is followed by Partabgarh (25.5%).



Karauli alone records a decrease (2·5%), but Dungarpur has only managed to add 1·3% to its numbers.

Of the five towns showing the largest actual increase since 1931, four are in Bikaner State—Sujangarh (8000), Sardarshahr (7000), Sri Ganganagar (6000) and Churu (6000). The fifth town is Sikar, the capital of the Sikar Thikana of Jaipur State (6000).

The highest percentage increase in ten years (53%) has occurred at Napasar. More laurels for Bikaner State!

The net urban increases for Rajputana are 350,000 since 1931 and 408,000 since 1891. In Ajmer-Merwara the figures are 34,000 in 10 years and 74,000 over 30 years.

And here, before passing on, a word about how cities and towns have come into existence. They may be grouped in two main divisions accordingly as they evolved consciously or unconsciously.

In Rajputana most of the towns appear to have been deliberately founded. Well-known examples of this are Jaipur, Bikaner and Udaipur. Only probably in the case of a very few, where famous temples existed (such as Nathdwara in Mewar) did they grow up independently of any deliberate planning from the beginning. In many parts of India it is a truism that a temple was a city in the making. For Rajputana, however, a narrow defile commanding a road or an isolated hill capable of easy defence, was more often the criterion. Examples of this are Chittorgarh, Bundi, Jodhpur, Amber and Lachmangarh in Sikar.

We may now consider the rural areas.

Attempts to classify population into the two groups, urban and rural, are always beset with difficulties. Yet such a division is essential if we are to get a true picture of our people: factors such as size of family, civil condition, literacy, etc., vary much between them. The main difficulty is that no definition of 'town' based on population alone can be satisfactory: the important criterion is whether a place has truly urban characteristics or not. This, of course, has been recognized and generally taken into consideration. Yet difficulties keep on cropping up. For instance there are places which in reality are only over-grown villages and sometimes hardly that: but they happen to be capitals of States and sentiment requires they should be recognized as towns. Then again there are others with considerable populations and purely urban in character, that still, for reasons that have never been stated but presumably are political, remain in the list of villages. An example of this is Pilani in Jaipur State. It has a population of over 6000, an Intermediate College and several hostels. Imagine the effects of lumping this seat of learning with the surrounding villages in comparative tables of urban and rural literacy! Take two other examples—Bandikui and Phulera—both railway junctions with Anglo-Indian and Christian populations. Classify them as rural and we have to record such anomalies as Christians being predominantly rural dwellers, whereas the true picture is exactly the opposite.

One more difficulty may be mentioned. It is this. Many a city and town has on its outskirts small isolated hamlets. In some cases

these are the dwellings of Sweepers, Chamars, Deds and other castes considered unclean. Where these people are wholly employed on work in the town, obviously their hamlets should be included in the town's population. But many such a hamlet has no connection with its large neighbour. Either the town has spread out towards an existing agricultural village, or a village has happened to spring up there. For such places there is no settled policy. They should, of course, be treated as separate villages and classed as rural. But frequently they are listed as part of the town, the deciding factor being apparently the convenience of the owner of the town. And he again may be actuated by some such consideration as whether a sugar-tax can be levied, or, if the boot is on the other foot, evaded.

Nevertheless, despite these difficulties and anomalies, the line is fairly clearly defined, though it is hoped that in future some of the more glaring defects may be cured.

Briefly speaking and at a glance the percentages of the rural population living in villages of various sizes are as under :—

In villages with a population of under 500	..42	%
Do. from 500 to 2000	..46	%
Do. „ 2000 „ 5000	..11·5	%
Do. above 5000	.. 0·5	%

In Danta and Khushalgarh practically every village is in the smallest category. In seven other States also, more than half of the rural population lives in villages with a population of under 500. It is only in Dholpur, Karauli, Marwar, Shahpura and Sirohi that we find the

majority of the rural population inhabiting villages in the second category. In Ajmer-Merwara the figures show marked divergence from the average. Here the percentages are 28·9, 49·8 and 21·3. This district has no village of above 5000 inhabitants.

The 1931 Census recorded nearly 1300 villages more than were listed in Rajputana in 1941. At first sight this might seem serious, especially as Palanpur with 580 and Danta with 178 villages have been added to the Agency. The explanation lies in the fact that several States of recent years have been overhauling their revenue records to good effect. Merwar, for instance, now returns 5563 villages, *i.e.*, 2507 less than in 1931. The Revenue Minister of one State told the writer the story of how, on assuming charge, he had taken stock of the State's villages. Some eighty were missing. The explanation he received was that they had been represented by a few grass huts specially erected for the 1931 Census, to bring the number of villages up to an auspicious one, but had long since disappeared. Of a truth Rajputana is a land of strange fancies!

## X

NOW WE COME TO OUR THIRD AND LAST TOUR. Permit your guide to present to you the peoples of Rajputana and Ajmer-Merwara. Be seated, comfortably, and watch them file past, one community at a time. And when the tumult has died down, your guide will recount to you some of those intimate facts concerning their lives, with which every well-informed person should be acquainted.

They are drawn up ready, rank upon rank ; but just before they come, consider one feature that seems common to all of them.

Those who have lived longest in this province have discovered too often among its peoples a veiled and wistful sadness. Always their thoughts seem to hark back to something, some time, that imagination or inherited memory tells them was more lovely than the present. Seldom do their thoughts appear to reach forward to a future. Not often do they smile.

In the case of most of them, the explanation for this lies perhaps in the knowledge that their forefathers were driven by invaders from the fertile lands of the north, and forced to fly for refuge to their present, far less generous home. Our sympathy goes out to them—the sort of understanding sympathy which wells up in every exile's heart at times when thoughts of Home press in upon him.

For the others it is difficult to feel much sympathy—the Rajput, his eyes ever lifted up towards his now crumbling fortress set on a hill top, and sighing for the bad old days, when might was right and each Thakur was a law unto himself ; the Bania groaning at the passing of those times when princes and princelings were deep in his debt, to pay for their fratricidal wars, and cursing the State railways, industries and days of peace which have made these princes independent of him ; the Brahmin shocked and pained that no longer does Hinduism regard feeding him and his community as the greatest act of merit ; the Afghan and Pathan now eking out a poor living since constrained to give up the lucrative profession of selling the service of his

sword to whoever bid the highest; the Dancing Girl, whose charm and grace could empty the coffers of a rich State (a few of them still do remarkably well!): these and others are as the Israelites who cried before Moses for their "loved Egyptian night." Forty years in the desert cured the Israelites and brought a smile back to their faces. Neither forty nor thrice forty years have cured their counterparts in Rajputana: still they continue to brood over the passing of the days that are no more.

And now the vast army of more than fourteen millions is on the move. The Hindus have the place of honour in the van by reason of their numerical importance.

In 1931 and earlier censuses Hindus were classified under some one hundred and fifty different castes. It is indeed a happy portent for India of the future that for 1941 it was decided to abandon this system. The placing of emphasis upon social cleavages has contributed in no small degree to the keeping of Hindus in thrall to invaders during three-quarters of a millenium. But might not the step taken have been a longer one? There are \*people who think that the time has arrived when Indians—Hindu, Muslim and others alike—should return themselves as Indian Nationals, differentiating among themselves, possibly only in Tables of Religion. And even here it might be advantageous to abandon for a generation the collection of data for religions, thus allowing time for those differences they have engendered to sink into proper perspective.

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\* Quite a number of persons refused to record any caste in 1941, and several instances were reported of persons calling themselves 'Hindustani'

And here a word as to the origin of the idea to classify by 'Community' rather than by 'Caste' and 'Religion.'

This method was first mooted in 1931. In the view of the Census Commissioner for India at that time, returns of caste have no statistical value, and the attempts of innumerable castes to use the census for purposes for which it was not intended were excessively troublesome. Later, Dr. Bowley, the well-known statistician, gave his support to the idea, but added the proviso that, if this innovation were introduced, comparability with earlier censuses should be preserved. Finally, Mr. Yeatts, the Census Commissioner for India in 1941, adopted the suggestion.

One defect in the scheme, as the writer sees it, is that 'Community' has never been defined; at any rate, for Census purposes. For the Muslim Community the criterion appears to be religion. This produces such anomalies as placing Rajput Mussalmans in the Muslim Community. Actually, except in matters of faith, these people are entirely Hindu by tradition and social outlook. Then, to place Jains in a community by themselves is again to confuse religion with social characteristics. Many Jains, viewed socially, should be considered as belonging to the Hindu community. For instance, Agarwal Jains inter-marry and inter-dine with Agarwal Hindus. But these are only a few of the anomalies that exist. The Indian Statutory Commission, it may be observed, did not recognize a Hindu Community at all, but only Mahomedans, Non-Mahomedans, Indian Christians, Anglo-Indians and Europeans.

It may be argued that the term 'Community' is universally understood; that, indeed,

the whole polity of the country is based upon it. That is precisely why communities have been tabulated on this occasion. Those charged with the organization of the Census were left without an alternative.

Signs are not wanting, however, that the present polity of India will probably undergo considerable changes in the near future. So, with all deference, the writer suggests that, when it was so wisely decided to ignore caste, it was unfortunate, to say the least, that the necessity existed for having to invent a stepping-stone to bridge the gap between caste and Indian Nationality. The word 'Community' itself, by reason of its close relationship with that enemy of India's progress, communalism, has an unpleasant flavour, and now that we find its use has caused almost as many difficulties as it was intended to cure, its abandonment in favour of some other classification appears desirable for the future. For instance, as has already been suggested, we might (future polity permitting) call all the people of the country simply 'Indians', or, should it be thought that India is too vast a country to have only one designation for its children, we might classify them by the Province or State of birth, *i.e.*, Punjabees, Madrassesees, Hyderabadesees, Mewaris, Bikaneris, etc. That, surely, would solve all difficulties, and, incidentally, bring India in line with other nations. It would certainly put to an end to all haggling over terminology, than which there is no more thankless and futile intellectual exercise.

But now we must turn our thoughts back to the Hindu Community, since, whatever the future may decide, it is by communities that we have to consider the people of the present day.



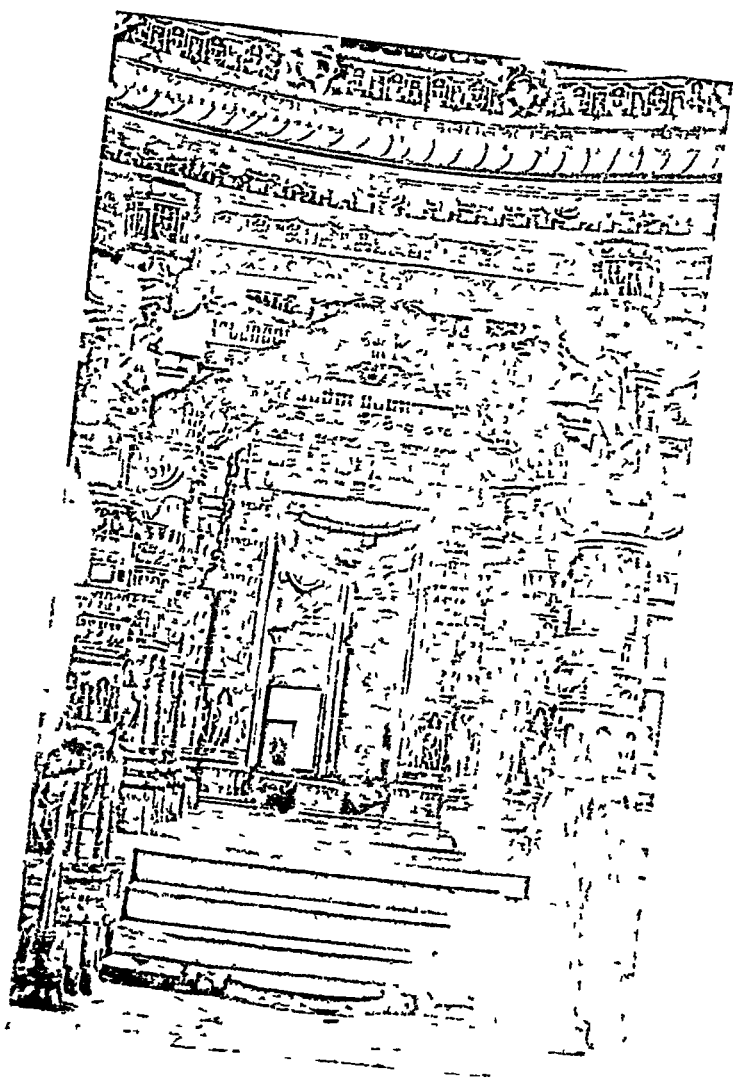
The Hindus constitute 75% of the total population of Rajputana and Ajmer-Merwara. If to them we add the Tribes (there is a move to do so in the largest tribal areas, and on the part of many Hindus) then the percentage becomes approximately 94%. As, however, the Tribes in Census Tables are to be considered separately, we will assume that the first figure is the more representative one. On this assumption the Hindu Community numbers 10,694,000 and forms the majority community in every State except Banswara, Danta, Dungarpur and Kushalgarh, where they are outnumbered by the Tribes.

Of this large total  $86\frac{1}{2}\%$  live in the villages and constitute the main bulk of the peasants. Only  $13\frac{1}{2}\%$  are city or town dwellers, as compared with  $38\frac{1}{2}\%$  in the case of Muslims and 74% in the case of Christians. The Hindus therefore are pre-eminently an agricultural folk.

There is an excess of 544,000 males over the number of females in this community. This gives a sex ratio of approximately 900 females to each 1000 males, a condition, as we shall learn later, common to most sections of the population.

Information concerning the literacy, unemployment, age, civil condition, etc., of this community, as of others, will be discussed later. At the moment we are merely taking a general glance at them.

Muslims number 1,388,000. As already mentioned in connection with the Hindus, and taking Rajputana and Ajmer-Merwara as a whole, 38.6% of Muslims live in urban areas. In Ajmer-Merwara, however, this percentage rises to the considerable figure of 71: in Alwar and



Vimla Shah's Temple—Abu  
(By courtesy of the author of Abu Guide )



Bharatpur it drops down to 11% and 18% respectively, due to the presence of the Meos, who are almost entirely agriculturists. In Danta and Jaisalmer the percentage of Muslims living in towns is only about 4.

And here a short digression to learn something about the Meos.

These people are numerically the first race in Alwar State. They occupy about half the territory. During the Mahomedan period of power, they were notorious for their turbulence and predatory habits. Later, however, they were broken up and have since become generally well-behaved.

According to Major Powlett, though they claim Rajput origin, there are grounds for believing that most of them spring from the same stock as the Minas. Though supposed to be Muslim by faith, their village deities are the same as those of the Hindus, and they give to the Holi the same importance as the Muharram, 'Id or Shab-i-barat. They also observe the Dashera and Diwali. Their names are, as a rule, purely Hindu, their women tattoo their bodies (a Hindu custom obnoxious to Muslims), their dress is Hindu, and they have no scruples about getting drunk. In fact, it is hard to say whether they are Hindus or Mahomedans, although to-day, due to propaganda, they stoutly affirm their adherence to the Muslim fold.

The Muslim community is a little less than 10% of the total population of Rajputana and Ajmer-Merwara. In Palanpur and Tonk, which are Muslim States and where Muslims might be expected to be found in greater strength, their proportions of the total population are only

about 10% and 15% respectively. It is in Alwar State that we find them in the greatest relative numbers, *i.e.*,  $26\frac{1}{2}\%$ , and secondly in Ajmer-Merwara ( $15\frac{1}{2}\%$ ) and this figure is exclusive of 19,000 Mahomedan Merats, who have been classed as a Tribe.

The ratio of females to males is even lower in this community than it is among Hindus, being 891 as compared with the Hindu 900 per 1000 males.

The total number of Jains in Rajputana and Ajmer-Merwara is 361,000, and this is one of the few communities which has more females than males : the excess is 1500.

Jains are to be found in every State and District, but Marwar is the home of one-third of their numbers. Many also are settled in Mewar (77,000), Bikaner (34,000) and Jaipur (32,000). About one-third are town-dwellers, and the rest live in the villages. In Karauli and Kushalgarh, however, the opposite seems to be the case, for in those States almost all Jains have been returned as living in urban areas.

Under the heading 'Tribes' are included Bhils, Girassias, Merats, Minas and Rawats. Whether the choice of this word is happy or not, or even useful, is a matter of opinion. In Dungarpur, Danta and Banswara the State policy is to return them simply as Hindus. The first two named States indeed declined to specify them otherwise, and it has been necessary to make long and complicated calculations for the preparation of the Table of Tribes. In the end, of course, the figures given are only approximate. Then, too, the effect of the campaign to persuade Bhils to call themselves Minas has had, it seems,

more effect than originally thought probable. It looks as if from 1951 onwards a tribal table will have to be discontinued. As to how far it is justifiable to call a Bhil, for instance, a Hindu is discussed in Appendix C.

Although no general tables for Religion have been abstracted on this occasion, information on this point in respect of the Tribes is available and relevant to the issue under discussion.

In 1911 no less than 423,000 numbers of the Primitive Tribes were returned as Animist by religion. By 1931 this figure had dropped to 226,000, and now, in 1941, despite the addition to the Agency of the States of Danta and Palanpur, the figure has slumped to a mere 5700. Apparently the popularity of Animism, Tribal religion or whatever other term you prefer to designate it by, is on the wane and is being ousted by Hinduism.

The numerical strengths of these tribes as returned (or estimated) for 1941 are as under :—

Bhils 759,000	Minas 765,000
Rawats 113,000	Girassias 51,000
Merats 28,000.	

The grand total of 1,716,000 represents 12% of the entire population.

Bhils are found in large numbers only in Banswara (171,000), Dungarpur (157,000) and Mewar (211,000). They nevertheless form a considerable proportion of the population in the small States of Danta, Kushalgarh, Partabgarh and Sirohi.

The Minas are fairly well distributed all over the Agency, the largest number being found in Jaipur and Mewar.

Rawats live mainly in Ajmer-Merwara, Marwar and Mewar, with only very small colonies elsewhere.

The Girassias are entirely confined to the contiguous States of Marwar, Mewar, Palanpur, Sirohi and Danta.

Merats are found only in Marwar, Mewar and Ajmer-Merwara.

The Christian Community is sub-divided into Indian Christians, Anglo-Indians and others. Bhils and other members of the Primitive Tribes who have accepted the Christian faith are, for Census purposes, shown in the tables under the heading of 'Tribes.'

The Christian community is a very small one, scarcely .1% of the total population. Its components are as follows :—

Indian Christian (excluding Tribes)	..	..	..	8200
Anglo-Indians	..	..	..	2000
Others	..	..	..	1500
Christian members of Tribes	..			1400

A few Indian Christians are to be found in practically every State, but considerable numbers occur only in Ajmer-Merwara (3900), Kotah (1000), Marwar (900) and Jaipur (700).

Anglo-Indians are confined almost entirely to Jaipur and Ajmer-Merwara.

Tribal Christians are found chiefly in Banswara (980), with about 300 more in Kushalgarh and Mewar. Inquiries from the Canadian Mission at Banswara elicited the information that they estimated their flock to

number about 1300, but were aware of efforts on the part of certain Hindu organizations to persuade Christian Bhils to return themselves as Hindus. As, besides this Protestant mission, there are also Roman Catholic missions in the field, it would appear that the fears expressed were not ill-founded.

All members of the population, who do not belong to one or other of the communities mentioned above, are classed for Census purposes as "Others." Under this heading come Parsees, Buddhists, Jews and Sikhs. The numbers of the first three mentioned are exceedingly small. They are: Parsees 686, Buddhists 21, Jews 106. Sikhs number nearly 83,000.

When we consider that in 1881 only 9 Sikhs were recorded in the province, their presence now in such formidable numbers appears almost an invasion. The opening of the Gang Canal in Bikaner is responsible for attracting most of them—79,000 in fact. The balance are spread over most of the States and Ajmer-Merwara, the largest numbers being found in Bharatpur, Jaipur, Kotah and Ajmer City.

In concluding this brief survey of the various communities in the province, the writer has to express his regret that, at the time of going to press, the figures for the comparative increases in each community were not available. This is a pity as such information is of great interest.

## XI

WHEN WE COME TO CONSIDER THE FOLLOWING intimate and allied aspects of our



people—age, age composition, expectation of life, fertility of married women, civil condition, sex and sex ratio—we are on safe grounds only in respect of the last three items. The first four depend on the correctness of ages returned, and of all data collected at each Census in India it is accuracy in the matter of age, which is the most defective, both as regards original replies and the comparative tables.

Indians are anything but statisticians by nature. In this connection, the writer is reminded of an address given before the Royal Statistical Society by Lord Meston some years ago. What he told them was roughly as follows, though it has to be admitted that it does not seem to have done that august body or its followers much good, since an almost identical warning had to be given to them by that very practical-minded statesman, Sir G. S. Bajpai, in 1940.

Ask a peasant how old he is and he will, as likely as not, reply: "Twenty or thirty," or: "Haven't you eyes to see for yourself?". Ask him how far it is to his village and he will tell you: "Eight or ten miles," and this will surely turn out to be at least fifteen. Ask him when a certain happening occurred and he will tell you, with much show of exactitude: "When three gharis of the night had gone." But nobody knows exactly what a 'ghari' is, and the best available definition is that it represents the time a healthy man takes over 360 respirations.

This vagueness about ordinary measures of life is inherent in the Indian's method of handling phenomena. And if he is unable to express his

own age in figures, he is still more hopeless, even when educated and intelligent, about guessing the ages of others. In the India Census Report of 1921, Mr. Edye, the Census Superintendent for the United Provinces, is quoted thus: "I had my own age guessed by hundreds of Supervisors and Enumerators, and the estimates were seldom within five years of the truth, and varied between 16 and 60."

All this being so, it may well be asked why the recording of age by years in India is persisted in especially as Indians have an excellent and fairly accurate alternative method of their own which all understand. The answer to this question probably is to be found in the fact that Government servants of to-day have got themselves so surrounded by their wretched files, that they cannot see the people whom they are here to serve. Thus, in its turn, has led to the now only too general habit of trying to graft occidental methods into oriental operations. Earlier officials lived much closer to the people, and used the indigenous method. And it is probably a safe bet, that the incompatibilities, found between census age returns of those days and later ones, are due to the inaccuracies which resulted in changing over to a system which involved those (to the Indian mind) mysterious things—numbers.

One argument for the retention of the existing and Western system of computing age is, that the indigenous system with its limited groups is not suited to the requirements of the ever-growing life assurance business in this country. But surely, if accuracy of Age Tables means anything to Assurance Companies, as we must presume it does, then they would prefer

some accuracy to much inaccuracy, if only as a means of checking up on their existing life-tables.

The Indian system divides mankind into :

Bacha (Infant)

Larka or Larki (Boy or girl)

Jawan (Young man or woman)

Adher (Middle aged man or woman)

Buddha or Buddhi (Old man or woman)

Careful inquiries have shown that these natural groups can be converted into mathematical groups, with remarkable accuracy, as follows :

Bacha up to 3 years of age.

Larka, Larki over 3 years and up to 15 years of age.

Jawan over 15 and up to 30 years of age.

Adher over 30 and up to 45 years of age.

Buddha, etc., over 45 years of age.

Even uneducated Indians seldom make mistake in allotting themselves or others to the correct group. Thus, with the conversion to figures worked out, accurate, if not numerous, age groups can be obtained. Unfortunately the converse does not hold good. Once an ordinary Indian has been asked to express his age in figures, he usually goes completely wild; and the mere fact that he assesses his own age to be, say, 35, carries no guarantee that, asked under the alternative method, he would reply: "Jawan."

For the 1941 Census a novel method was tried out. Each Enumerator was supplied (in theory at least) with a Local Calendar, a device intended to assist friendly but ignorant citizens in discovering their own age. These calendars were drawn up for a period going back about

eighty years. Within this period, the years were given corresponding to incidents likely to have been well known in local experience and unlikely to have been forgotten, for example, the great war of 1914-18, the chief famines, floods or epidemics, the imposition of some new tax, etc. When a person being enumerated declared that he did not know his age, he was supposed to be asked whether he remembered some of the incidents in this calendar, and the furthest back he remembered gave the key.

In Rajputana mass inertia, in most instances, took one look at these calendars (that is when the Charge Superintendent or Supervisor had been energetic enough to issue them at all) then winked. Mind you, reader, there is very little these people can teach one about steering clear of avoidable trouble. And certainly conscientious reference to these calendars *could* cause quite a lot of fuss, bother and misunderstanding. Take the case of the old veteran at Tonk for instance, upon whom the writer ventured to experiment with one of these calendars.

“Hey : Grandpa what’s your age ? ”

“Don’t know.”

“Never mind, I’ll soon work it out.”

*(Takes our Local Calendar).*

“Here you are. Let’s see. . .er....do you remember the Great War ? ”

“You bet I do ; I’d just grown a nice beard. Incidentally I got badly wounded in it, and have never been the same man since.”

“Tough luck that, Grandpa....That makes you about 52 years old. Anyway I suppose you got a pension or gratuity, and certainly a medal ? ”

“Devil a bit. I got nothing.”

"That's ridiculous. Everyone, who took part in the Great War, got a medal, and a pension if disabled."

"Not me."

"Didn't you apply to the British Government?"

"What had the British Government got to do with it?"

*(Lengthy pause).*

"Look here, old man, what Great War are you talking about?"

"The Great War between Lawa and Tonk, of course."

"Gee! There's nothing about that war in this calendar.....How long ago was it?"

"A long time ago. Perhaps fifty years; or may be more, or may be less. I never was one for figures: that's a job for the Banias. I'm a soldier."

. . . . .

And to further illustrate the point, here is another record of a conversation which took place between an Alwar Enumerator and another old man—

"Baba, what is your age?"

"I'm standing before you, please see for yourself."

"What was your age at the time when one of the walls of Jeysamand lake collapsed?"

"Oh: that happened only yesterday."

"Then, what was your age at the time of the Chappania famine?"

"I remember it very well. We all left our village and went to Ballupura."

“Splendid, but what was your age at that time?”

“I used to tend a flock of sheep and goats at that time.”

“Yes, yes, but what was your *age* at that time?”

*(Points to a small boy standing nearby).*

“Well about the age of this boy, I should say.”

“About 10 years, eh?”

“Well yes, about 10 or 20 years.”

. . . . .

Where were we? . . . . . Oh yes!

Concerning these Local Calendars the writer has a confession to make. It was he who first put forward the idea in its present form. He can only hope that its introduction in other parts of India proved more successful than it did in Rajputana, where the results were sadly disappointing.

After these revelations, the reader will certainly regard with suspicion anything that may now be written about age composition of the population, expectations of life, or between what ages women have the most babies, etc., etc. And possibly he will be justified, since the essence of science is to discriminate between fact and fiction, and to avoid crossing the too easy passage which separates learning from fable.

On the other hand it must not be forgotten that all Census Reports have admitted this weakness in the Tables compiled. Their defence for continuing to print them in hopes that accuracy will improve, can perhaps be found in

these words of Herodotus: "Nothing is impossible if you allow enough time for it to happen."

Nor would it be altogether fair to impute undue optimism to Census statisticians, since, despite the known inaccuracies in recording age, tables based on the figures collected show a certain constancy of error, which argues that, on broad lines, they may be given some credence.

Then again, a careful study of age returns discloses two, more or less, constant idiosyncrasies of the population in the matter of preference for certain numbers or terminals. The first of these is that, when husbands are asked to give the ages of their wives, they almost invariably express them in such a way as to show that their wives are younger than themselves by \*2 to 3 years, 5 years or 10 years—no other number enjoying any appreciable popularity. Local knowledge computes the first (2 to 3 years) as from 1 to 2 years too low, the second (5 years) as about right, and the third (10 years) generally the face-saving reply of some old carnalist who has married a girl young enough to be his daughter or grand-daughter. Happily, however, this last class is becoming a small one and its corruptive effect on the general value of the tables insignificant.

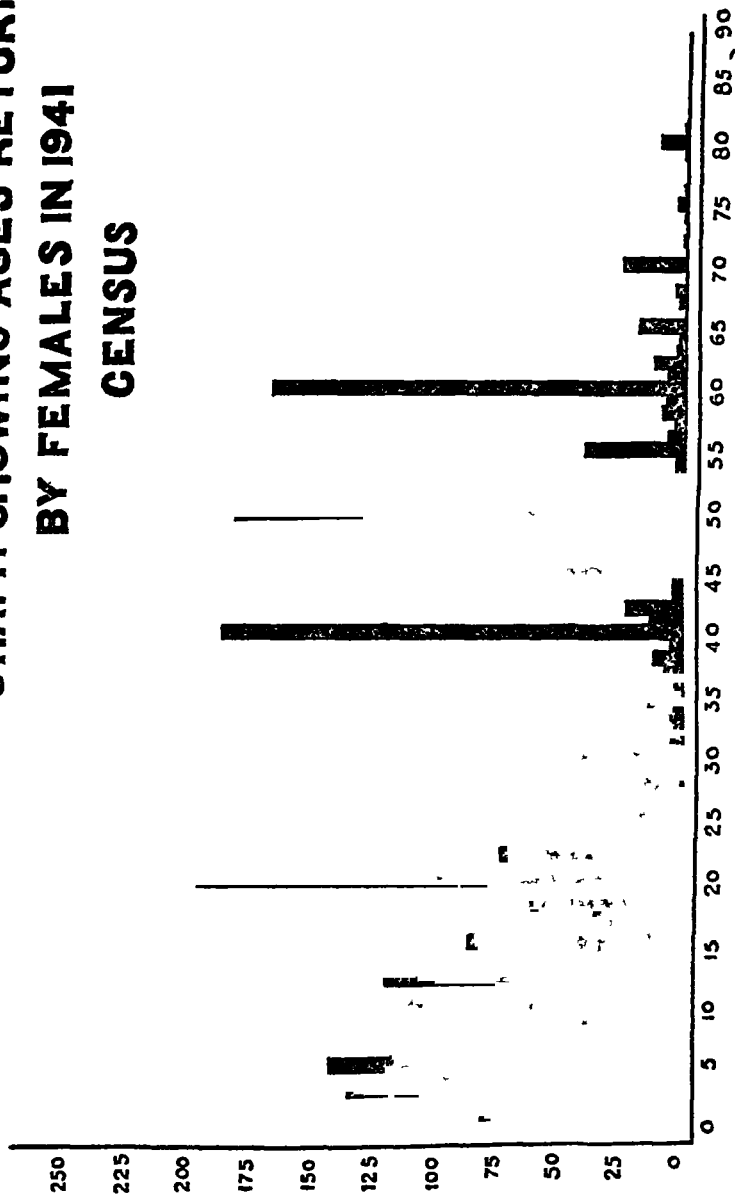
†The second feature is that there is a marked tendency among those who are entering the stage of 'Jawan' or 'Adher,' especially women, to return to their age in some multiple of 5 or 10. The graph at page 89 clearly shows this.

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\* This at least is the deduction to be drawn from data collected when an Economic Survey was recently made of the rural areas of Ajmer-Merwara

† This tendency was first commented upon in the Rajputana Census Report of 1921, but appears from 1941 data to still hold good.

# GRAPH SHOWING AGES RETURNED BY FEMALES IN 1941 CENSUS





In concluding these remarks on the vexed subject of age, it would appear that, while we may derive some fairly reliable *general* data from a study of the returns, there has been, on the part of statisticians, too great a striving after figures for the sake of figures, and that a return to the indigenous system, at least in backward parts of the country, is overdue. Details of age under the Western system are unobtainable in Rajputana, and will remain so until the countryside becomes literate. In the meantime (and it is likely to be a long time,) it seems folly, to use a Mewari expression, to go chasing after a horned donkey.

Well then, we are on our guard, and will not fall into the error of trying to argue about details from data so slender and so uncertain. Yet, as previously remarked, certain broad facts can be gleaned, and these are not without interest.

A Swedish statistician has worked out a theory that in most countries the number of persons aged 15 to 50 years is uniformly about half the population, and any variations, which occur in the age constitution, take place among persons of under 15 or over 50 years of age. Where the population is growing the number in the former group is much greater than in the latter, but when it is stationary the numbers in the two groups approach equality.

The position in Rajputana as disclosed by the recent Census shows that 48%, or nearly half the population *is* in the age group 15 to 50. In the other two groups, those of 15 and under outnumber those of 50 years and over by 41% to 11%. Calculations for Ajmer-Merwara show very similar results (51, 38 and 11), and the position since 1931 has changed so little as to be

negligible. The application of this theory, then, confirms our earlier forecast that, unless new factors come into operation, we may expect a steady and considerable increase in population by 1951. This belief is further strengthened by the increase noted in the number of children aged 0 to 10 years as compared with past Censuses. The figures are per mille of the population and are as follows :—

1921.....560

1931.....570

1941.....586

Comparison of these figures with those for England and Wales emphasizes the great difference that exists in the respective age constitutions of East and West. There the percentage of those of 50 years and older is nearly 20% but that for the age group 0-15 years only 27%, a situation which illustrates once again that Indians are a young people with relatively poor prospects of surviving to ripe old age, but that their marriages are fruitful.

When we come to examine the position among the various communities, we find some marked differences. Here are the figures.—

	<i>Ages 0—15.</i>		<i>Ages 50 and over.</i>	
Hindus .. ..	41%	..	11%	..
Muslims .. ..	42 „	..	10 „	..
Jains .. ..	37 „	..	12·8%	..
Tribes .. ..	42 „	..	8·7 „	..

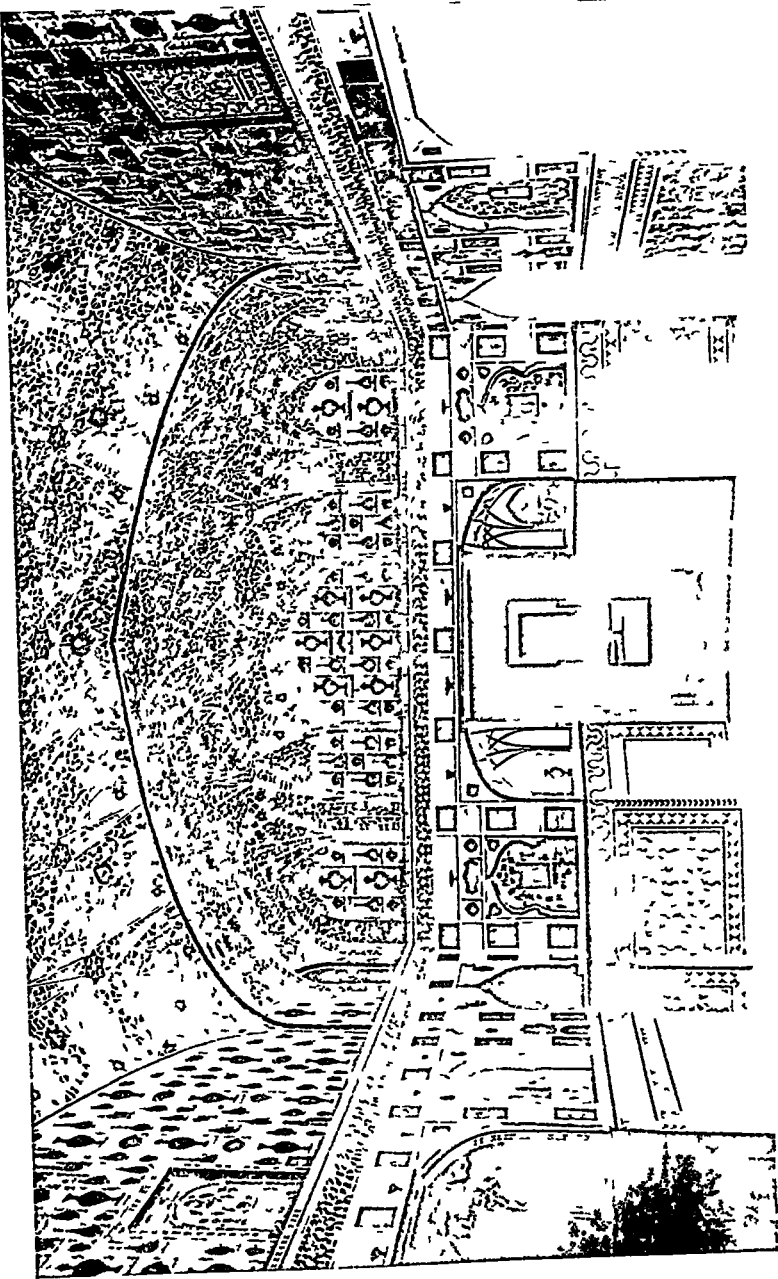
So the Muslims and Tribes are seen to multiply most readily, and the Jains to be the longest and the Tribes the shortest lived.

One fact emerges which should be of interest to the medical faculty. It is this. Judged over thirty years two periods in life are clearly highly dangerous for Indian women. They are approximately 12 to 18 and around 40 years. The first is certainly connected with too early motherhood, and the second, probably, with the struggle to gain freedom from the slavery of the moon. And should there occur epidemics such as influenza or plague, then it is among women of these two ages that mortality is heaviest.

The Superintendent of Census for Marwar has produced a number of instances of longevity in that State. They have, of course, no statistical significance but they may be of general interest.

This little centenarian club consists of five members, the oldest of whom is Moti Bharti. He claims to be 120 years old. He lost his sight eight years ago and is also somewhat deaf. Yet he gets up at 4 a.m. each morning. A heavy drug addict, he boasts he has never called in a doctor all his life. He attributes his long life to the fact that he has always given women a wide berth.

Next is Shanker Giri Sadhu, another life-long celibate. He still possesses all his faculties and gives his age as 115. He was born at Amritsar, and, if as he avers, he can remember the Sikh war and was grown-up at the time of the Mutiny, there is no reason to doubt his statement. In his view life can be prolonged considerably if one does not worry, and worry can be avoided by always speaking the truth. He professes an enormous admiration for Queen Victoria.



Amber Palace—Jaipur, State



The remaining three members are ladies. Of these Mst. Kunana, a Rajputni, is the eldest, 110 years old. But life for her now has few joys. She is blind, deaf, in ill-health, and sleeps most of the day and night.

Then there is Mst. Balki, Bhambhi by caste and aged 108. Though feeble, she still manages to get about. She has never travelled in a railway train or motor, but still hopes to do so. She is the lady referred to later as having been a wife for over 90 years. She was married at the age of 11. Her husband, also a centenarian, died only recently.

Lastly we come to Mst. Rambha, Kumbha by caste. She states that she was married in Samwat 1905 at the age of 14. She is thus 107 years old. Her health and sight are still good. She has had two husbands and six children, but only one child is living.

And this brings us (by contrast unfortunately) to the question of the expectation of life among the peoples of the province.

These expectations for Rajputana and Ajmer-Merwara were worked out by an actuary for the first time in 1931. Since they were based on returns of age which were certainly inaccurate, they must be taken as approximate only. Even so, they paint a terrible picture of human wastage—one which cannot fail to shock us even if it is as much as ten years wide of the truth. A baby boy at birth can only expect to live about 24 years. If he survives till the age of five years, then he may hope to live till the late thirties, but a girl stands a less chance, since many young wives die between the ages of 12 and 18 due to early childbirth. And to bring these figures

into true perspective, it should be realised, that a European child at birth may look forward to a life lasting three score years and a little more. All of which proves once again, of course, that the people of this province are a young people with relatively few persons of middle or old age.

The causes, to which this terrible state of affairs can be attributed, have been examined by several qualified writers. The most general opinion held, it seems, is that child-marriage, pre-puberty sexual relations and the purdah system are mainly to blame. Well, all these causes could easily be remedied, given the will, but they are questions which only Indians themselves can tackle, since they intrench upon religious or quasi-religious observances.

## XII

TURNING NEXT TO CIVIL CONDITION, SEX ratios and size of families, it might be expected that everyone knew if he or she was male or female, and whether married, unmarried, widowed or divorced. It is a little surprising therefore to find that even this statement does not always hold good. In 1941 one European at least did not know his civil condition. Apparently he had once been married, and the last occasion on which he had seen his wife was on the platform of Victoria Station, London, where she saw him off in the boat-train taking him to the battle-front in Flanders, some time in 1916. Since then he had never seen or heard of her again. For all he knew he might be a widower or even divorced. Even as regards sex, questions were always cropping up as to whether eunuchs should be classified as females or males. At

one meeting a certain man was so persistent in his questions about them that it became necessary to silence him. "Why worry so much about your pals?" the speaker shot at him. He deflated visibly before a roar of laughter from the rest of the gathering.

And here is a sweet little story, which simply cannot be omitted.

An Enumerator arrived at a house where the only male member was a small and chubby boy.

"Do you think you can answer the questions for your family?"

"I fink so."

"Good. Then what's your mother's civil condition?"

"What does that mean?"

"Er.....is she married, widowed or divorced?"

(Pause for deep thought) "I fink she *must* be married, or how else could I be here?"

. . . . .

To continue.

The data collected for civil condition provides some very interesting side-lights on the life of the people and represents probably some of the most reliable information we were able to collect, despite the little difficulties recounted above.

India, as everyone knows, is a much-married land, and, if proof is wanted of this statement, it can be obtained from the number of bachelors and spinsters per mille of the



population as compared with England and other Western countries. The following table explains the position :—

Country  1	Number per 1000 of unmarried	
	Males 2	Females. 3
Rajputana .. . . .	500	384
England .. . . .	592	571
Italy . . . . .	598	545
U S. A .. .. .	580	527

These figures are striking. It is, however, when we come to examine the age at which the people here are married, that we find most food for thought.

Information collected at the 1941 Census shows that in Rajputana there are no less than 9500 little girls aged five years or under who have been married; that in the same age group 680 have already lost their husbands; and that among girls of all ages up to twenty the appalling number of 19,000 are widows, \*many of them doomed by custom ever to remain so. In these instances actual numbers serve better than percentages to bring out the horror of the picture revealed.

The position as to child-marriage appears to be this. In 1931, due to the introduction of

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\* The truth of this statement is borne out by the fact that the percentage of widows in Rajputana is 13 and that of widowers only 6. Custom does not preclude widowers from remarrying, but, among high-caste Hindus at least, it forbids remarriage of widows.

the Sarda Act in British India and to the fear that it might be enforced also in the States of Rajputana, there was a rush to get children married. Kotah alone was unaffected, due to the fact that as far back as 1927, marriages of boys and girls below 16 and 12 years respectively had been prohibited. Figures for 1941 show a swing back to a level only slightly higher than in 1921, and one which appears to be the normal for Rajputana. The position at present is that, among boys, 5 per mille are married between 0 and 5 years of age and 34 per mille between 5 and 10 years. Among girls of the same age groups (1 to 5 and 5 to 10 years) the figures are 9 and 93 respectively.

In 1931 the incidence of child-marriage was highest in Marwar, Jhalawar and Tonk. Here, too, in 1941 we find a swing back. In the last two mentioned States the rates are actually considerably lower than in 1921. In Marwar alone the ratio remains high, *viz*, 80 per mille among females of 0 to 10 years of age as compared with 103 in 1931 and 55 in 1921.

Thus child-marriage still remains a grave social problem in Rajputana. The Muslims are the worst offenders, with 32 per mille of children married before reaching the age of 10 years. Next in order come the Tribes with 16 per mille, then Hindus with 14 per mille. The Jains and Sikhs return only 8 per mille for the same age.

The incidence of widowhood varies greatly according to the community, due to differences in custom. For each 1000 women of all ages it is as follows: Jains 197, Hindus 142, Muslims 109 and Tribes 98, amply illustrating once more the effect of the ban on re-marriage of widows among certain Jains and Hindus.

There is no data concerning the average length of married life, but an instance has been reported from Marwar where one couple is alleged to have been married for over 90 years. Surely a record, especially as its truth has been checked and held to be tolerably reliable.

The ratio of males to females in this province, as also in many parts of India, is in marked contrast to those in Western countries. The 1931 All-India Census Report showed that for each 1,000 males there were only 940 females and that the defect persisted in the reproductive ages. The corresponding figure for England and Wales is in the neighbourhood of 1,100, *i.e.*, an excess of females over males, and this was for all ages.

In Rajputana in 1931 there were only 908 females to every 1,000 males; in Ajmer-Merwara the proportion was still lower—892. The figures for 1941 show that in the former the position is almost identical (907 instead of 908), but that there has been a slight improvement in the latter (902 instead of 892). Taken over the whole province there are only 898 females per 1000 males living in the towns as against 908 in the rural areas, where conditions are more stable.

When we come to consider individual communities, we find that, except among the Jains, males are always in excess of the females, the ratios of females to 1,000 males being:—Hindus 904, Muslims 895, Jains 1016, and Tribes 925. These figures approximate closely those for 1931 except in the case of Tribes, where there has been a decrease of 57.

Taking the province as a whole females only exceed males at two ages—3 to 4 years and 70 years and over. The first does not appear to have much significance and the difference is

small. The other, however, shows clearly that women on the whole are longer lived than men.

Colonel Cole, the Census Superintendent for Rajputana in 1931, attempted to correlate sex-ratio with density of population, but failed to find any relation. The writer suggests that there may be some definite connection between social progress and the ratio of females to males. A glance at the sex proportions in various parts of India in 1931 (figures for 1941 unfortunately are not available at the time of going to press) reveal a deficiency in the backward North and North-West and, with the exception of wild and woolly Rajputana, a gradual increasing proportion as one goes South, culminating with an actual excess in Madras, which is probably the most progressive and best educated province of India. If to this we add the seemingly reasonable causes suggested by one eminent Indian writer on the subject, to account for women being less in number than men, the theory now put forward would seem to be established.

The causes suggested are :—

- (i) Among backward people in India, the birth of a daughter is usually considered a misfortune. The expression \* 'Betī ka bap' is one of abuse. It is therefore probable that †female infanticide is still practised, or, at least, that many daughters are not counted at the Census.

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\* Father of daughter

† The writer has good grounds for believing that female infanticide is still commonly practised in some parts of Rajputana. In one area he computed only a few years ago that the loss so occasioned among girl babies was 50% among Rajputs. He was corrected by a Rajput Chieftain, who put it at 80%. There are, however, signs that Rajputs are at last making genuine efforts to end this barbarous practice.

- (ii) During famines and epidemics preference is given to sons, and so the death-rate among daughters is higher.

### XIII.

#### AND NOW SOMETHING ABOUT FEMALE FERTILITY in the province.

Fertility Tables are designed to provide data for calculating increases of population at any time during the ten years prior to the next census. If we know the rates of production of children and the numbers which survive for various ages of mothers in each community, then we can make a very fairly accurate estimate as to how many new children will have been added to this population, say, in 1945. The idea, of course, is a very sound one, and an attempt to put it into practice was made for the first time in 1941.

Fertility Tables for 1941 have been prepared for the three largest communities of Rajputana and are being published. As to their accuracy, it is impossible to give any guarantee, since that old bugbear, age, is again involved. Then, too, it is a well-known fact that many parents regard it as unlucky to mention the number of their children, especially if the children are of tender age. To do so may be considered by the gods as boasting, and the gods may punish them by taking the children away.

The two questions asked of all married women on this occasion were :—

- (i) How many children were born to you, and how many are surviving ?
- (ii) What was your age at the birth of your first child ?

As regards the first, quite apart from the consideration that to answer it truthfully was deemed by many to be unlucky, there were literally hundreds of cases where, with the best will in the world, the question *could* not be answered accurately. For instance, among the Meos, when a widow remarries, she leaves her children by her first husband with his family. There was a case in Alwar State where a Meo lady had been married three times. She could state accurately the number of children she had borne, but had no idea whether those by her first and second husbands were still alive or not. There was a similar difficulty among the Bhils, but there the situation was aggravated by the fact that a Bhil lady, if she wants a change of mate, need not wait till her husband dies. She looks round for a man of her fancy, then goes and sits in his house. If he approves, he pays a bride-price to the ex-husband, hands over any children begat by him, and lives happily with the lady till she again feels the urge for a change in bed-mates. And so the game goes merrily on.

But there are other difficulties, too. What is one to do with a lady who counts up on her fingers the number of children she has had, seriously and for a long time, and then blandly admits that she simply cannot remember? Or with the poor old soul who had borne numerous children and lost them all, and who, bursting into tears at the memory, proceeded to pour a torrent of abuse upon the Enumerator for having reminded her of her loss, finally refusing absolutely to answer any further questions?

As against those cases where facts were hazy, one sometimes ran up against super-

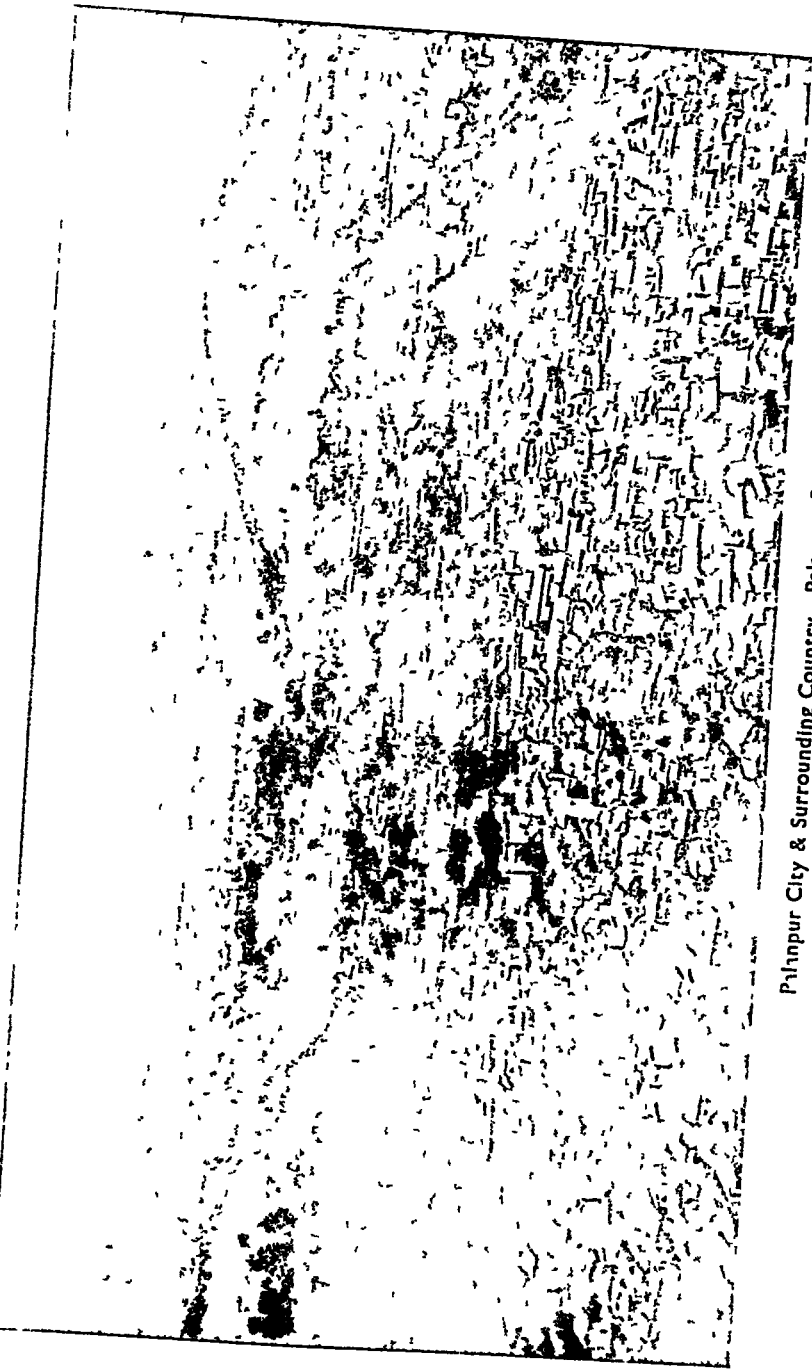
accuracy (if there can be degrees in accuracy !). There was the lady, who smilingly announced that she had three children. All were alive, thank you, and there was another child of eight months alive in her womb ! Another optimistic (or sarcastic ?) dame begged the Enumerator, in the name of God, to restore all her lost children so that she might be able to reply to the question after actual counting.

Talking of children generally, the writer, after two years as a Census Superintendent, has learned to regard them with suspicion. They have a nasty way of turning up in unexpected places and in unexpected numbers. What he means to say is this. Take the children between the ages of 0-5 in the 1921 Census. There were 644,000 of them. By all usual reckonings some of these should have died during the following ten years and others (to judge from migration figures) have left the province. Yet in 1931 this same group (now aged 10—15 years) had become 780,000 ! Whence the unborn addition of 136,000 ?

But that is not the end of the story.

By 1941 this same group, now young men and women of between 20 and 25 years of age, had increased to 1,210,000—almost exactly double the original figure ! Very clever mathematicians with mystic formulae may be able to account for this. To the simple-minded writer, however, it appears as a clear case of fissionism as practised by jelly-fish and other queer forms of life !

This matter is only mentioned to bring home to readers that a Census officer's problems are frequently profound.



Palanpur City & Surrounding Country—Palanpur State





A few more interesting facts may be recorded in connection with these Fertility Tables. From Tonk comes the news of one Hindu woman who had her first child at the ripe (very ripe for India) age of 53, and of one Hindu girl of Barwa caste who began her maternal duties at nine. In Banswara one woman of 43 had given birth to 21 children, of whom only 3 survived. So perhaps when the Superintendent of that State wrote 'Fatality' for 'Fertility' he was not far wrong.

Well, reader, there you are, and now you know all the snags in the 1941 Fertility Tables. They are certainly not very accurate, but that does not mean that public money (your money, you'll probably call it!) has been wasted, nor that we cannot learn *anything* from them. Moreover, if India is ever to become a civilized country, Fertility Tables will have some day to become a permanent feature of the Census. So, viewed only as a first attempt to break new ground, time and money have not been so badly invested.

And here are some of the more interesting points which have emerged from our first attempt to collect such data, and about which, within very broad limits, we can be fairly confident that they reflect the near-truth.

The three castes for which data was collected were the Jats, the Chamars and the Brahmins. These, in the order shown, are numerically the strongest sections of the public.

Among women of these castes, the period of greatest productivity is from 17 to about 44 years of age and the mean age at the birth of the first child approximately 19 years. By the time a woman has reached the age of 44 the average

number of children she has borne and the average number which have survived are as follows:—

	Born	Survived
Jats . . . .	4.28	3.1
Chamars . . . .	5.12	3.4
Brahmins . . . .	5.04	3.2

There is thus shown to be little difference in the fertility rates of the various castes for which data is available or in their nursery management.

Among the Jats and Brahmins, mothers of between 14 and 16 years of age appear to produce the healthiest children: this at least is the age when the percentage of survivals to children born is at its peak. Among Chamars the corresponding age is a little higher—17 to 21 years.

The position revealed concerning very early motherhood is as follows:—

Caste	Number of married females	Total children born	Total children surviving	Mortality rate of children
Jats aged 9 to 13 years . . . .	27,000	461	437	25%
Chamars aged 9 to 13 years . . . .	18,500	212	73	66%
Brahmins aged 9 to 13 years . . . .	12,000	370	260	30%

It is difficult to imagine a more damning case against premature motherhood than the one thus revealed. But these rates by themselves paint only part of the picture. Hindu girls aged 5 to 10 number 797,000. In the next age groups (10-15 years), the one in which these cases of premature maternity occur, the figure is 117,000 less, and continues to decrease further in each successive age group.

Two other facts of interest can be gathered from the Fertility Tables. The first is that there is some evidence that women who produce small or medium sized families live the longest, and the second: that longevity of mothers is transmutable to their progeny. The argument supporting this second deduction is too long to include here but is based on calculations from the Life Table constructed in 1931.

#### XIV

#### A NUMBER OF GENERAL SUBJECTS REMAIN FOR discussion.

It has already been mentioned, when considering communities, that for 1941 it was decided not to abstract tables of religion. The questionnaire, however, contained the question: What is your religion? This led in some instances to attempts to inflate the ranks of Hinduism. The matter is discussed at length in Appendix C (Some notes on the Bhils of Rajputana) and need not detain us here.

In passing it may be of interest to record some odd answers to this question. One European wished to enter himself as a lapsed Methodist; two persons affirmed that they had no religion at all. Another stated he belonged to

the Hindu fold but was a Christian during famine years. Certain Mahomedan Jogis in Alwar returned their caste as Mahomedan but their religion as Hindu, since otherwise they would not be entitled to the offerings in Shiva's temple. But probably the sagest answer was that given by a Sadhu. He said that he was still searching for the best religion to follow and would reply to the question when he had found it, adding that, if the Enumerator was interested in learning the result of his quest, he might leave his address.

On the general subject of whether any purpose is served by the compilation of religious statistics a number of articles appeared in the Indian Press. One leading article, headed 'Census War' categorically deplored the asking of any question about a person's religion in a country where differences of religion are the main obstacle to the growth of a true and healthy national feeling. The following is a short extract from that article and merits attention:

"No doubt we shall be told that these figures are of importance to research workers, anthropologists or other people with long names ending in—ologist. On reflection, however, we do not believe that they are of the slightest use to anybody except for entirely evil purposes. In a civilized country where the citizens are bound by a common love of country and true patriotism, to know a man's religion is of no interest to anybody whatever except himself."

While compiling the House Registers in 1940 it struck the writer that it would be interesting to find out exactly how many temples and masjids existed in the province. Accordingly instructions were issued to include these in the lists.

The total number of temples recorded for the whole province (exclusive of Jaipur State, which failed to provide data) is 48,331. This figure does not include the thousands of wayside shrines and little altars dotted over the countryside. Expressed otherwise, it means to say that there is one temple for approximately every one hundred and fifty caste Hindus, or one temple to each  $2\frac{1}{2}$  square miles of territory. In some States (Alwar and Kishangarh for instance) the average rises to as much as one temple for every seventy worshippers.

Were we to make the lavish gifts which raised these temples and endowed them a criterion of the morality of the donors (usually Rajputs or Merchant Princes), we should have to rate them high. According to Tod they more often prove the contrary, at any rate as regards the Rajputs, having been prompted by death-bed repentance for past crimes or by mere vanity. Sethji's technique is a little different. He levies a percentage on the other fellow in every business transaction he puts through (Shivaji ka lag) and builds from the proceeds temples and charitable institutions to his own and God's honour. But, on the whole, the Hindu community reaps the benefits, or can do so if it wishes to. Certainly its members make a great show of religion.

Turning next to masjids we find that (exclusive of Jaipur for which State figures are not available) there are 5641, providing an average of one masjid for every 186 followers of Islam.

Tanks, it may here be mentioned, also were listed. Again excluding Jaipur State, we find that there are no less than 13,109, large and small. Of these more than half are situated in the dry area. Bikaner has 3781, Marwar 3049 and Jai-

salmer 803, some of them, however, little more than village ponds.

And here, as we are considering amenities, it is convenient to mention travel facilities which exist in the province.

There are 3064 miles of railroad. Of the total length State railways own 1939, the B. B. & C. I. Railway (Broad and Metre gauges) 1014 and the G. I. P. Railway 111 miles.

As illustrating the growth of rail-travel during the last half-century, it may be mentoned that the B. B. & C. I. Railway sold 2,304,000 tickets in 1890-91 and 4,506,000 in 1939-40, representing an increase for all stations in Rajputana and Ajmer-Merwara of 88%.

Of metalled roads there are 3500 miles and of unmetalled 7400 miles. Jaipur has by far the greatest length of metalled road, the mileage being 570. Kotah comes next with 347. Incidentally a State Census Superintendent recently referred to unmetalled roads as 'cartable roads', (since they are more able to take carts than cars)—a term which seems to have a certain survival value.

Jodhpur possesses one of the finest aerodromes in India. In times of peace it is a regular port of call for Imperial, Dutch and French airliners. Aerodromes of less importance exist in the capitals of many States, notably Jaipur, Bikaner and Udaipur.

Travel by motor-bus is now very popular everywhere. Even in such unexpected places as Jaisalmer and the north of Sheikawati, where only the merest tracks exist, it is quite a common sight to see a heavily laden bus ploughing its swaying and uneasy way through deep sand, and threading the maze of sand-dunes.

Now let us learn something about the languages spoken by our people.

Owing to the need of war-time economies it was decided in 1941 not to publish language tables for Rajputana, although data had been collected for mother-tongue as well as for other Indian languages used in the ordinary course of every-day business.

Rajasthani is the mother-tongue of three-quarters of the people of the province, according to the 1931 Census. For census purposes this has been sub-divided into Marwari, Central Eastern Rajasthani, North Eastern Rajasthani and Malvi. With the exception of the first and last named these terms are unknown to the general public, who have a considerable number of their own names for the dialects they speak, such as Bagri, Harauti, Braj Basha, Vagdi, etc.

The extent to which these sub-languages and dialects are mutually intelligible among the people varies of course, with the dialect and the intelligence of the people. On the whole, however, there is quite a high degree of mutual intelligibility, though here and there local words occur which could not be understood outside that locality.

Basically, Rajasthani would appear to be Hindi, and its dialects vary from the nearly pure Hindi of Braj Basha to corrupted forms which become influenced by Sindhi or Guzerati the nearer they get to the homes of those languages. One curious fact among many of these dialects is the difference as spoken by men and women. For instance, in Marwar and Jhalawar the men are said to mingle Urdu words with their dialects, which women do not. Indeed a considerable intermingling of Urdu in Rajasthani is noticeable



wherever, as in Ajmer, Moghul influence was strong and protracted.

As education spreads, it seems reasonable to suppose that Rajasthani and all its dialects will gradually give way to Hindi or Urdu of the printed word. That surely is the teaching of history, and the day is probably not far off when, to keep alive these dialects for sentimental reasons, societies, such as are to be found in the English counties of Devon, Sussex, etc., will have to be founded. It seems, therefore, that we are going to needless trouble to tabulate dialects for this province. It might well be deemed sufficient to tabulate for Hindi, Urdu, Rajasthani, and those dialects of Guzerati such as Bhili and Vagdi spoken chiefly in the southern portion of the province.

It is probable that a knowledge of both Urdu and Hindi has spread considerably during the last decade, but, since languages have not to be tabulated on this occasion, we cannot accurately gauge their advance. Possibly this is a good thing, since, before the 1941 enumeration took place, the returning of these languages as mother-tongue became the cause of a mild census war. The writer was approached by a leader of the local Muslim League demanding that enumerators should be *ordered* to record the mother-tongue of every Muslim as Urdu. It was pointed out to this gentleman, that the purpose of a census is to record the facts as they exist and not as they may be in the dim future or as he would like them to be now. Undaunted by this reply, he carried on his propaganda, which was promptly answered by Hindus, whose leaders proceeded to advise members of their community to record their mother-tongue as Hindi. How far such ridiculous antics managed

to corrupt the language returns will now probably never be known, nor possibly does this matter much, except in so far that it causes one to wonder furiously as to what fate is in store for a people, who understand or care so little that they are prepared to provide their own future government with figures and data deliberately corrupted to suit their own political schemings.

In lighter vein, it may be mentioned that in the case of a Muslim child under one year of age, his language was recorded as "Kuch Urdu."

When we come to the subject of literacy, it is easy to deplore its slow progress in Rajputana. But there are always two sides to every question, and the writer is reminded of a recent experience which shed some light upon the other side.

Motoring through Bharatpur State he stopped for a puncture and got into conversation with a small boy of about 10 or 12 years old. Was there a school in the village?....Yes Did he attend?. No. Why did he not attend?... The answer came short and disarming: "Gai kaun chare?"—"Who would graze the cattle?"

And that's the problem generally over all the rural areas. Yet signs justifying hope are not lacking, and to-day not infrequently one sees a child, one eye on the cows and the other on a slate or First Reader. The urge for learning has been born and grows even if slowly.

As to the opportunities for learning provided by the various governments for their young subjects, a glance at Appendix A (Columns for Colleges and Schools) will perhaps serve our purpose best. To this let it be added that the increase in the number of schools in many States during the last fifty years has been striking. In

Marwar, for instance, they have risen from 24 to 213; in Palanpur from 13 to 100; in Kotah from 11 to 118; in Bikaner from 5 to 284, and in Ajmer-Merwara from 47 to 416.

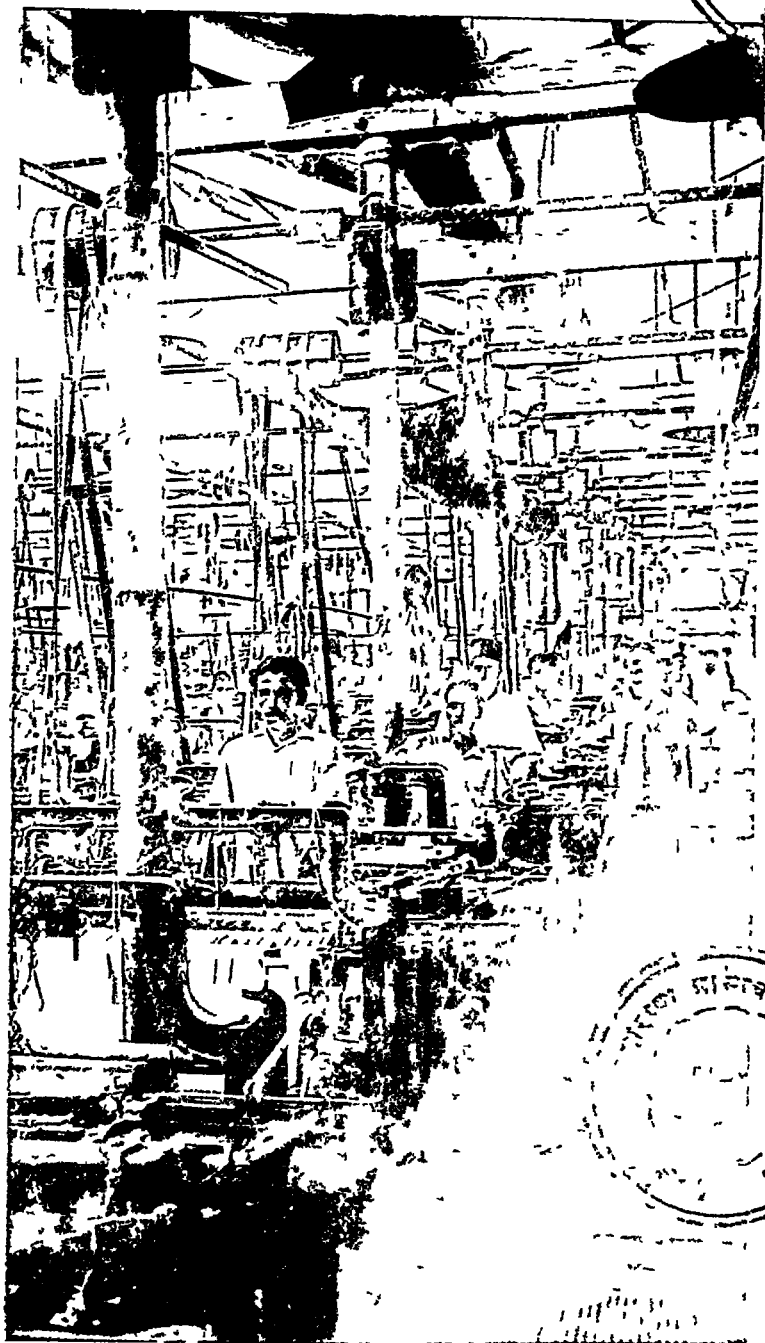
Concerning the success of educational policy, here the Census of 1941 would seem to have a message. Far too many graduates and matriculates it appears are being turned out for the jobs available for young men with those qualifications or at least for the sort of jobs they are prepared to accept. This aspect will be further discussed when we come to deal with the figures of Unemployment.

And now let us see what the 1941 Census reveals about literacy in the province.

In Rajputana, from the age of five years upwards, one male out of every 11 and one female out of every 95 can at least read and write. In 1931 the corresponding figures were 13 and 167. In the last decade there has been a 72% increase in the number of literate people against an 18% increase in population.

Examining the position among the various communities we find the situation to be as below :—

					Percentage of Literate	
					Males	Females
Hindus	..	..	..	..	19	1
Muslims	..	..	..	..	11	2
Jains ..	..	..	..	..	56	6
Christians	.	..	..	..	67	63
Tribes	..	..	..	..	1	·06



Cotton Mills—Kishangarh State



In the case of the Hindus the percentage is undoubtedly kept low owing to the fact that this community includes a high proportion of peasants. Jains, if we exclude from Christian all Europeans and Anglo-Indians, hold the pride of place in literacy. The Indian Christian community, however, is not far behind due to the excellent work done by the Christian Missions in the Agency.

The percentage of literacy among the subjects in each of the various States is given in Appendix A. As opportunities for providing education in the different States are by no means the same, comparisons are not of any great value. It will, therefore, be sufficient here to mention that Jhalawar records the highest percentage for literacy (8%) and that the next in order are Kishangarh and Bikaner (7%). At the bottom of the scale come those States where the people are largely or predominantly Tribal, such as Banswara (2·8%) and Dungarpur (3%). The surprise is supplied by Dholpur (3%) and Tonk and Karauli (3·7%).

So much for Rajputana and now let us see what the position is in Ajmer-Merwara.

Here we find a considerably higher proportion of literacy. One in every 5 men and 1 in every 22 women can read and write. Since 1931 literacy has increased by 25 per cent.

In Ajmer City, due in part no doubt to the considerable number of European and Anglo-Indian residents, the percentage of literacy among males is as high as 36% and among females 13% or, otherwise expressed, 1 male in  $2\frac{1}{2}$  and 1 female in  $7\frac{1}{2}$  can read and write.

Lastly some information about literacy in English.

In Rajputana, out of a total literate population of 723,000 persons, 63,000 males and 4100 females can read and write English. In Ajmer-Merwara out of 73,000 literates, English-knowing males number 17,000 and females 2500. Expressed in terms of the whole population, this means that in Rajputana 5 persons in every 1000 and in Ajmer-Merwara 33 persons in every 1000 can speak English. During the last ten years there has been an increase among English-knowing people of nearly 37,000 in Rajputana and of approximately 6,000 persons in Ajmer-Merwara.

In conclusion the situation as regards literacy in the province can be summarized thus. Judged over a long period, considerable progress in education has been made throughout the province. The incidence, however, of illiteracy is still extremely high, especially in the Agency. Reading the figures for literacy and for unemployment conjointly it would appear that the emphasis in future should be placed on primary rather than on higher education.

Next some information as to unemployment. Let us begin with an anecdote from Jaipur.

One man, asked if he was in employment, replied: "Yes, I have just secured a paid post in the Census." To the further question as to how long he had been unemployed before that, his answer was: "Since the last Census in 1931." If the moral of this story is that anyone connected with the Census deserves ten years' rest at the end of his labours then

the writer heartily agrees: it is a back-breaking and even at times a heart-breaking business.

Another story—from Ajmer-Merwara this time—illustrates some of the snags that can arise from trying to translate English into an Indian tongue. 'Employed' was expressed by the Hindi words: 'Kam men laga hua.' Accordingly when an enumerator was questioned as to the correctness of recording a rich Seth's wife as 'employed,' he defended his action by saying that, when he went to call on her, she was engaged in giving Sethji a bath and ended with the challenge: "Kam men laga hua kih nahin?"—Wasn't she employed?

As has already been stated, unemployment is essentially an \*urban problem; it hardly exists in the countryside among the villagers. There, in many areas at least, the question is one rather of chronic under-employment due to climatic limitations.

In the towns, serious as the situation is revealed to be by the figures collected, these do not, the writer suspects, tell the whole truth. The first question asked was: "Are you in employment?" and, if the reply was in the affirmative, no other question was to be asked. A large number of 'temporarily employed' thus have been shown as 'employed', irrespective of any immediate chances of again being thrown out of work. For instance, the Superintendent of Census in the Jaipur State drew the writer's attention to the fact that many an ex-college

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\* Proof of this statement can be obtained from an examination of the figures of unemployment in Ajmer-Merwara. There out of a total of 1600 unemployed persons, 1400 belong to Ajmer City and the balance of 200 is attributable to the other 4 towns of this district.



student, unable to find work, hired himself as tutor to present students, earning thereby a meagre pittance and keeping the wolf temporarily from the door, but actually of course loading the dice more heavily against the chance of permanently excluding that hungry beast.

The situation revealed is as follows.

In the whole province 27,627 persons have been returned as in search of employment, the incidence being heaviest among persons aged 17-21 years (40%) and those aged 22-26 years (22%). Unemployed women number 4,000 and again most of them are between the ages of 17 and 26 years.

States returning the greatest number of unemployed are Bharatpur (4,986), Bikaner (4,868), Bundi (881), Jaipur (2,949), Kotah (1,299), Marwar (6,811) and Sirohi (1,725). In the remaining States the incidence is light, varying from 258 in Alwar to as low as 7 in Jaisalmer and nil in Danta and Lawa. Mewar, despite its size, has only 243 unemployed. The figure for Ajmer-Merwara is 1,638.

In writing of education in the province it was mentioned that the returns for unemployment appeared to indicate that too many Matriculates and Graduates were being turned out each year from the Schools and Colleges. The following are the figures on which that statement was based.

In Rajputana there are 1,472 unemployed Matriculates or S. L. C.; 247 Intermediates in Arts and Science and 201 degree-holders. Corresponding figures for Ajmer-Merwara are 193, 35 and 32 respectively, almost *all* of them belonging to Ajmer City.

It seems clear that throughout the province Intermediates, Graduates and Post-graduates in Arts and Science form a glut in the employment market especially in Ajmer City. The remedy seems equally clear—to warn present and future students of the danger of selecting arts and science and to switch them over to some other and more practical side of learning.

Examining the periods of unemployment, we find that those unemployed for less than one year exceed, but only slightly, those out of work for longer periods.

Summarizing the position, it may be said that unemployment is mainly to be found among young educated persons living in the cities and towns. Unemployment among illiterates is chiefly confined to three States—Marwar (1,950), Bharatpur (3,000) and Bikaner (2,200). In Marwar illiterate unemployment is reported to exist chiefly in the rural areas and to be due to loss of cattle in the last famine. In Bharatpur about two-thirds of these people are said to be villagers, and often past working age. In Bikaner they seem to be equally divided between the towns and villages. As, however, these figures represent a very small percentage indeed of the populations of those States, there appear to be no grounds for alarm. The percentages are—Marwar 1% of rural population, Bharatpur 4% of rural population and Bikaner 0.2% of the total population.

It would have been fitting to round off our study by learning how the people of the province earn their daily bread.

Regrettably only the most meagre information is available on this subject at the time of

going to press. The compilation of Occupational Tables is always a long and difficult task. On this occasion, however, the situation has been complicated by the failure of many enumerators and compilers to grasp clearly what was required of them. Even the public misinterpreted the questions at times, as witness the Dhobi's very respectable wife in Alwar. Asked her means of livelihood she became furious and demanded: "Do you think I am a harlot?"

But seriously, there is no doubt that the collection of data for industry and occupation proved a strain upon the abilities of the type of enumerator we usually have to employ in Rajputana. And, when sorting of the data collected was examined, many absurdities came to light. "Employed on road or rail transport" was clear to all, but "Water transport" received many a bhisty or anyone in fact who carried water. Then horse-breakers, (Chabuk Sowars) joined learned professors in the lists, and sellers of beads became pearl-divers just because "moti" (a pearl) is a word used frequently here to mean a bead. And so on. All very foolish or very careless, of course.

In the end, it is reliably expected, the data will be sufficiently disentangled to serve some useful purpose, but only after much expenditure of time and labour: and by then it will be too late for inclusion here. So those interested are advised to consult the volume of tables and statistics which is to be published separately at a slightly later date.

At this juncture it would be unwise to state more than that the five main occupational heads employ approximately the following percentages of the population: Agriculture 71%, Industry

13%, Commerce 6%, Professions 4·5% and miscellaneous occupations 5·5%. Now compare these with the figures for England and Wales—Agriculture 8% and Commerce and Industry 77%. Napoleon, it would seem, had statistical grounds at least for calling the English a ‘nation of shopkeepers.’

## XV

IF BEFORE FINALLY QUITTING THE scene, we climb once more the heights of Guru Sikhar whence we commenced our survey, and from its bare summit look with eagle-eye down upon those we have been studying, then perchance we may bring into truer perspective impressions blurred by too close visual contact.

Viewed at this long range, we see them, the peoples of Rajputana, moving ant-like through the warm enchantment of an August day, over a land now smiling but often stark and cruel. Few among them have not at some time been made to feel its powers to crush and kill. Yet still they live: and just to be alive is good; millions in Europe would attest this fact to-day.

And so, upon the mountain top, one falls to brooding and thinking upon their lot, till little by little there dawns the thought, that perhaps in the lives of these people stands revealed a great and fundamental truth—that a roof, a bed and food for wife and child, these are men’s needs, and only when they are lacking does poverty begin. For them are none of the complications, the senseless futilities that so-called higher-level living has brought to men of other lands. Even the shattering wars being waged beyond their borders leave them unmoved.

One thing and one thing only is lacking in their dreams—the certainty of water when monsoons fail,

But now turn north to where, glinting in the distant sunlight, flow the waters of the Gang Canal, threading its mazy way through thirsty, yellow sands. Is not this a token (a promise we could wish) that dreams of perennial streams can and may yet come true?

. . . . .

So here we are with our three tours completed and, let us hope, possessed of a wider and deeper knowledge of how those around us are faring; what their hopes, what their fears. As Mr. Yeatts, the Census Commissioner for India, pointed out in a broadcast from Delhi, the idea really of the census is to produce certain information for the use and consultation of the whole country, and, for that matter, the whole world. Every individual citizen can study this information and draw his own conclusions from it.

Mr. S. Mukherjea in another broadcast made a more personal appeal to every citizen of India. Said he :

“The Indian Census offers from decade to decade a moving phantasmagoria of social changes, through the infinite inter-relations of which, the attempt to discover the process of ever present laws is the most alluring of all forms of human research. Every facet of this variegated scene shows up some spark of interest. A mass of figures indeed, but figures in shining armour. There you see humanity in the raw—facts of social experience, where man is off his guard as it were—in the most intimate aspects of his outward behaviour.

"Thus the Census counts confidently on your interest. To some of you, I hope, it may appeal even as a hobby. If a hobby one must have why not make it one of figures? Chase them for whatever they are worth; elusive, Puck-like, they will allure you and elude your grasp, but you will always want to conquer them, and when you have done so, the facts of life around you will have for you a finer quality, and even your daily routine will wear a new vesture of romance."

It is hoped that this moving appeal will not go unheard. Yet, since the average citizen has shown only too plainly in the past his aversion to studying census data, or because perhaps, as Stanley Carson has suggested, it is the study of Mankind by Man that he invariably makes the ultimate study in which he indulges, it has been thought fit by the writer to attempt on this occasion to serv   up to him an oft rejected dish under what he trusts will be found to have been a more attractive dressing. Incidentally he has tried to avoid deserving Herod's epigrammatic judgment upon Claudius' Siege of Carthage—"there's too much meat in the sausage and not enough spice and garlic."

And here a word about style and form may not be out of place.

The style, considering that this is a Government publication, may to some sticklers for tradition appear to be somewhat unorthodox. Yet the writer does not feel himself called upon to defend this break with the past. Has not Mr. Churchill himself, in the guise of Jack the Jargon Killer, come forward to champion his cause?

As to the form, this was the suggestion of the Census Commissioner for India, and, if the writer may be permitted to add a word of praise, a very excellent suggestion, too. Mr. Yeatts even proposed that a little humour might be introduced into the essay at times.

As a matter of fact (and readers will doubtless have discovered this for themselves) it would not have been possible to keep the subject free from a certain tedium had not the enumeration brought forth so many humorous little incidents. Yet every one of these incidents, these stories, is entitled to a place by right, since each contains a lesson for those who have to organize censuses of the future.

These words—censuses of the future—suggest that an appropriate moment has arrived for mentioning some weaknesses which have made themselves evident in the census operations of this province. That weaknesses exist will have been descried by any reader, who did not skip the pages devoted to the subject of age records, for instance.

Of course, detraction and disapprobation are regrettably more easy than constructive criticism. Still, for the ills revealed in the Census of Rajputana and Ajmer-Merwara, the writer believes he can prescribe a cure. He suggests that remedy lies, firstly in a return to the indigenous system of recording age, and secondly in a simplification of the questionnaire. Undoubtedly the chief danger to the accuracy of the Census has lain in trying to elicit answers to too many questions. Some realignment, also, in the organization appears advisable, but this is a subject suited rather for the Administrative Report than for inclusion here.







With this plea the writer's task comes to an end. If in any way he has been able to break down past prejudices concerning the Census, and to breathe into his fellow citizens some spirit of interest in their message, then his several months of labour through the grilling heat of an Indian summer spent in Jaipur will not have been in vain. And this reminds him that, according to the Census of England and Wales 1921, in the case of seven countries the length of time which elapsed between the date of enumeration and date of publication of the final volume was four years. Admittedly Rajputana is only the size of a small country, still the fact that the writer, his colleagues in the States and his staff have been able to complete their work in less than eight months fills them with no little sense of pride and satisfaction.

NAMASKAR

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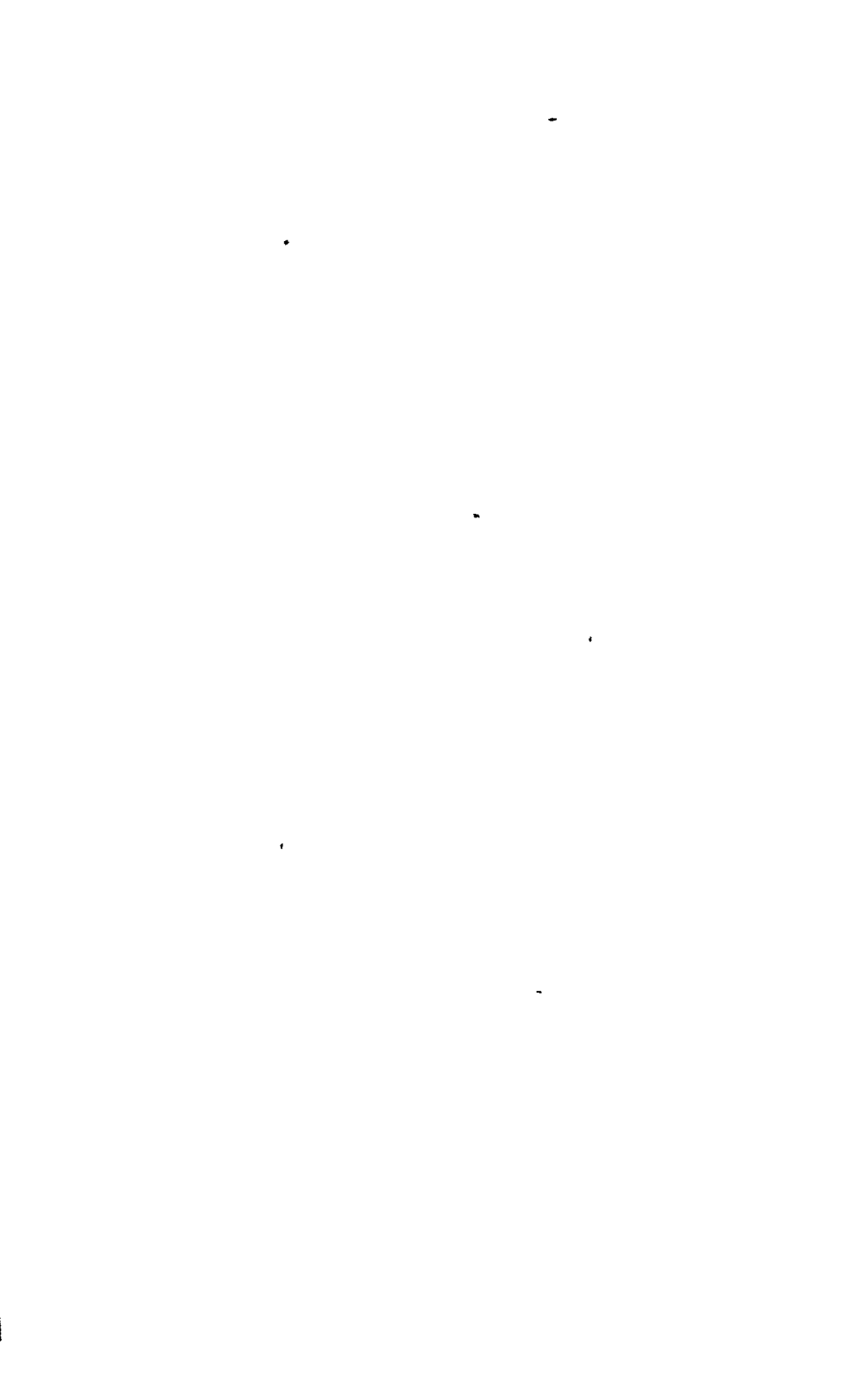
# RAJPUTANA AND AJMER MERWARA AS IN 1941.

No.	Percent- age of Literacy	Number of Unemployed	Normal Rainfall in inches	Miles of Roads		Miles of State Rail- ways	Hos- pitals & Dispen- saries	Colleges	Schools of all kinds
				Metalled	Un- metalled				
	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19
06	12 5	1638 (1013)	21	226	82	.	13	2	416
4	23 2	4 (4)	61	28	6	.	2	.	4
67	4 8	258 (198)	29	172	335	.	22	1	177
98	2 8	33 (19)	38	39	148	.	5	.	43
16	5 5	4936 (1979)	27	183	148	.	19	.	282
82	7 2	4868 (2648)	12	296	2182	741	52	1	284
758	4 3	881 (862)	28	85	175	..	7	.	47
178	3 6	.	30	21	235	.	2	.	11
540	3 3	71 (64)	29	197	101	.	10	..	20
776	3 0	139 (66)	25	16	288	.	5	.	19
938	5 3	2949 (2412)	24	570	295	245	53	2	443
523	6 6	7	7	55	268	..	10	.	33
501	8 0	1387 (1330)	36	75	78	.	7	.	16
364	4 3	49 (24)	28	37	49	..	6	.	17
230	6 5	55 (40)	22	33	6	.	8	.	31
548	6 1	1299 (1190)	28	347	526	.	33	1	118
293	2 8	5 (1)	35	8	100	.	3	.	4
11	5 7	.	19	.	..	..	1	.	1
185	4.6	6811 (4858)	16	328	1593	807	44	1	213
503	4 9	243 (142)	25	621	184	147	27	1	236
580	6 0	66 (47)	29	22	132	.	11	.	100
504	6 9	18 (18)	22	16	125	.	14	.	37
143	5 8	20 (13)	25	8	.	.	6	.	14
448	4 6	1725 (1582)	21	38	340	.	8	..	23
242	3 7	115 (58)	25	131	59	.	9	.	36

broad and Metre gauges) own 1014 miles, and the G I P Rly 111 miles of rail

**APPENDIX B.**

**THE  
GADIYA LOHARS  
OF  
RAJPUTANA.**



## CHAPTER I

### ORIGIN.

SCATTERED OVER MANY PARTS OF Rajputana are to be found small groups or single families of a strange people.

My first introduction to them was in 1935, while motoring in the Sikar Thikana of the Jaipur State. Drawn up by the roadside was a pitiful little group of carts, hung with rags and surrounded by dirty women, naked children and unkempt bearded men. In answer to my question as to who they might be, the following information was given to me by a Rajput friend—a veritable mine of information where folk-lore is concerned.

“These people,” he told me, “are known as the Gadiya Lohars—the Wandering Blacksmiths. They own no houses nor even tents; their only shelter is their open carts, beneath which they huddle in rain or sunshine. The men make a precarious living as workers in iron. Never in their lives have they slept beneath a roof. And this is the reason why.”

“Their forefathers, when driven from their homes at the sack of Chittorgarh in Mewar State, took a vow, that neither they nor their descendants would ever again enter a house to live, till the glories of Chittor had been restored. This event took place nearly four centuries ago, and still they wander; awaiting the restoration of their Israel.”

I have come across these wanderers many times since then, and always felt a special interest

in them. When, on assuming charge of operations in Rajputana and Ajmer-Merwara in connection with the 1941 Census, I was invited to conduct a type-study of any interesting caste or class, which had not as yet received the attention it merited, I at once thought of the Gadiya Lohars. But I found them shy, suspicious and, for the most part, unwilling to talk about themselves: moreover the time at my disposal was strictly limited. Indeed, I had almost decided to give up the study, when providence brought me timely aid in the shape of Mr. B. S. Bhargava, M.A., LL.B. This keen young research scholar of the Lucknow University threw himself wholeheartedly into the work, and it is to a considerable extent upon data collected by him that the following pages have been written. I gratefully acknowledge his help.

My original sketch of the Gadiya Lohars was made as one draft. On closer examination, however, this proved inadequate, and verified the maxim of Abu Hashim, the ancient Arabian sage, "The first step in knowledge is doubt," i.e., criticism. I, therefore, rewrote this study in its present form.

If you were to ask almost any person resident of Rajputana as to the origin of the Gadiya Lohars, you would, I feel certain, be given the same answer as was given to me by my Rajput friend in Sikar. These people, however, once they had overcome their objections to inquiries into their private business, might tell you more: in some cases, much more. Listen to the stories of their origin, related to us at various times and at various places. They are full of interest, even if their naivete does not put a strain on our credulity.

The simplest version is that their ancestors were Rajputs, blood-brethren and followers of the famous Rana Pratab, Prince of Mewar, and Jagirdars of Barmer, a district now under Jodhpur State but then in the possession of Rana Pratab. After their hill-fortress, Chittorgarh, had fallen to a Moghul assault, Rana Pratab wandered homeless from place to place, trying to collect fresh forces to restore his rule. In his plight he took an oath that, till the glories of Chittorgarh should be restored, he would never enter that fortress; never sleep on a bed; never eat off gold or silver plates; and never enjoy the luxury of a settled life. Along with the Rana the Rajput ancestors of the Gadiya Lohars bound themselves by the same oath. They still preserve it. It was after leaving Chittor that they took to their present trade as blacksmiths, and they did so both as a means of earning their living and as a disguise to save them from extermination by the Moghuls.

Here, in parenthesis, it may be remarked that, if this version were correct, there would be no apparent reason why the Gadiya Lohars should still be wandering or still be blacksmiths. The recognized descendants of Rana Pratab no longer feel bound by his\*oath, for the rule of his house has been re-established and the fort of Chittor repaired; though it is no longer the capital of the State.


I once asked a Gadiya Lohar how it was that his alleged Rajput forebears came to select the despised trade of blacksmiths rather than, say, farming or cattle-breeding for which a

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\* The only trace that remains of this oath is to be found in the custom still observed by the descendants of Rana Pratab of placing a few blades of grass under their beds, in remembrance of the fact that they were once homeless and had to sleep in the open



Rajput is more fitted. He gave me the following two explanations.

The first, which seems to be a corollary to the story related above, is that one day, when they were wandering homeless and hungry, god Mahdeo with his sacred bull, Nandi, came driving in a chariot. The axle of the chariot was broken and Mahdeo asked the wanderers to repair it for him. They replied that they had no tools, and so could not comply with his request. Mahdeo suggested they should make the necessary tools. Asked as to how this was to be done, Mahdeo explained: "Your tongs may be patterned on the front legs of a dog lying at rest (.

The sudden appearance in India of these unusually shaped tools seems to have been brought to the notice of the Emperor Akbar, for the following Hindi couplet is stated to date from those times :—

Akbar puche Akbara aandi  
Surat sandasi,  
Eran gori mukki hatora ?  
Tinon aek sath gari ?

Akbar asks himself a riddle  
Why are tongs so shaped,  
Why are anvils like knees and hammers like  
a man's fist ?  
Were all made at the samē time ?

The second explanation is charmingly naïf. This is how it was related to me.

When news of the approaching armies of Akbar reached the forefathers of the Gadiya Lohars, they went post-haste to inform the Rana. Terrified, they begged him to give the order to flee and to abandon Chittorgarh to its fate.

“Who are you to make so cowardly a suggestion?” demanded the prince.

And they, although Rajputs but hoping by humility to soften the Rana’s wrath, replied: “Only poor blacksmiths, my lord.”

Since that day neither they nor their descendants have ever dared again to call themselves Rajputs.

Another story is that, when Chittorgarh fell, thousands of Brahmins were put to the sword by the Mahomedans. So great was the slaughter, that the weight of the sacred threads taken off the corpses was no less than \*seventy-four and a half maunds. They relate, too, that the Mahomedans defiled the fort by hurling against it bombs filled with the blood of sacred bulls. The ancestors of the Gadiya Lohars moved to horror at these impious acts, took a vow that neither they nor their descendants would ever dwell peacefully or in comfort till Chittorgarh was cleansed and restored and the murder of these members of the priestly order revenged upon the Mahomedans. As, in their

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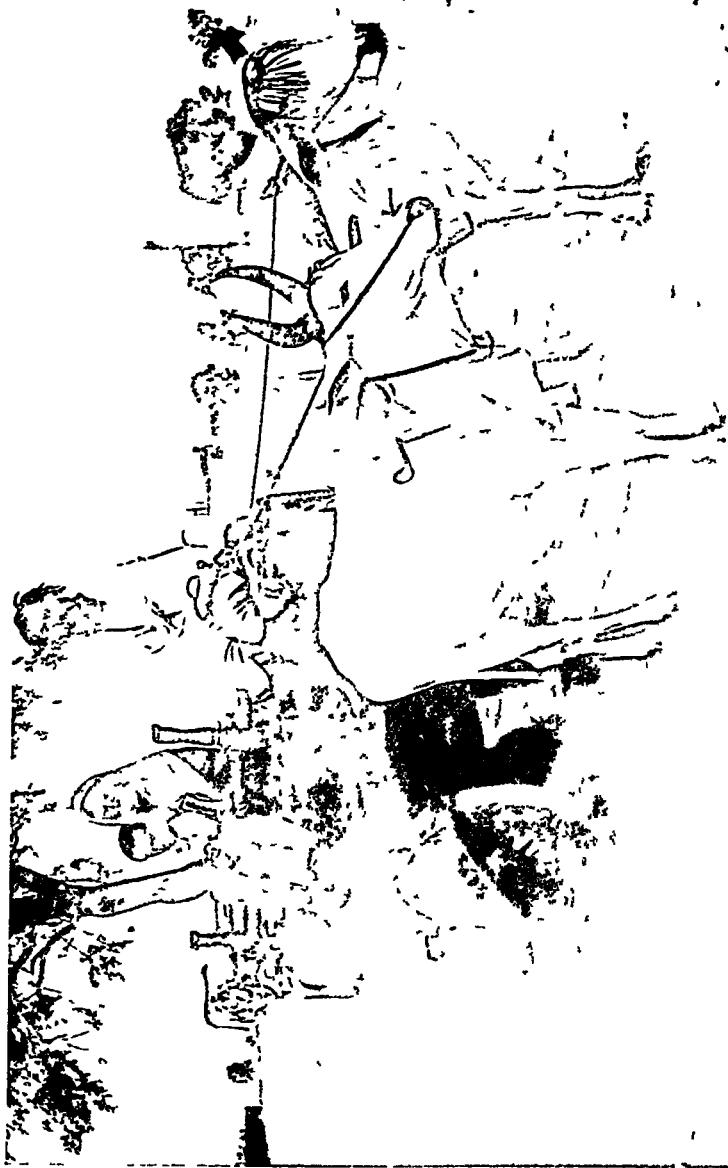
\* This number (74½) has in the course of time become invested in Mewar with a special sanctity. Used on the back of a letter, it replaces a seal and guarantees immunity from opening by anyone except the addressee.

opinion, neither of these conditions has yet been fulfilled, they must perforce continue to wander.

What appears to be an alternative to the first version given above is the following. It also presupposes Rajput origin, but does not necessarily make the Gadiya Lohars members of the Sesodia clan of Rajputs, *i.e.*, that of Rana Pratab of Mewar.

The story is, that a certain Rajput, by name Ugam Singh of Soda near Umar Kot in Marwar, sought in marriage a damsel of the name of Aie Lacha, who lived at Para Nagar in Gujerat. The lady was willing but her father, Rilmal Singh, refused his consent to the match. Grief stricken, Aie Lacha resolved to commit suttee, and burnt herself to death. The disappointed Ugam Singh and his party (said to be 9,000 strong) departed sadly but bent on revenge against Rilmal Singh. They stopped at Ajmer, to seek the advice of the Chauhan Prince there. That prince suggested that they should apply to Rana Pratab for help. They took his advice and proceeded to Chittorgarh. Before anything could be done, however, they got caught up in the Moghul attack on Chittorgarh, and, to a man, lost their lives in the massacre that followed. It is further related that on their way to Ajmer they camped at Nadol, where to this day exists a tank (Nada) known as 'Loharia Nada'—the Blacksmith's lake.

It is difficult to see how this last recorded piece of information fits into the picture or how it can have any significance for the Gadiya Lohars, since there is nothing up to this point to connect Ugam Singh and his followers with



Chittory, Gadliya Lohars.



Lohars. The Gadiya Lohars themselves seem to have found a difficulty here, for the story continues thus.

Before Aie Lacha died she laid a curse upon her family members—henceforward they should be homeless, condemned to roam and earn their daily bread as blacksmiths going from door to door. The Gadiya Lohars still venerate Aie Lacha and desecrate Rilmal Singh. They have even provided Aie Lacha, the virgin, with a son, Khetla, (adopted, I presume) failure to worship whom is believed to bring ruin on the tribe.

Frankly I can make neither head nor tail of this \*story, unless the first part is provided merely to serve as a background to Aie Lacha's suicide. If this is so, then the Gadiya Lohars' connection with Chittorgarh disappears. The most that can be said is that it supports their claim to being Rajputs in the line of Aie Lacha, and provides another explanation as to why members of that proud race have had to descend to so menial a task as iron-work.

And now for a story of the miraculous.

†Tinkhi Maharaj, a saint, was one day busy at his devotions. Suddenly a fairy appeared before him and deposited a baby boy in his lap. Asked for an explanation, the fairy explained that the child had been formed by the dropping of a bead of perspiration on to the sand

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\* Some Gadiya Lohars deny any knowledge of Aie Lacha or identify her with Aie Mata, the goddess of small-pox. They mention, however, another suttee—Sohan Bai of Chhota Udaipur in Jaipur State. They claim her as an ancestress who lived and died long before they migrated to Chittorgarh.

† A few Gadiya Lohars of the Ajmer settlement, whom I questioned about Tinkhi Maharaj, professed never to have heard of him. For this I can offer no explanation. Among the majority of Gadiya Lohars Tinkhi Maharaj is regarded as a most important person.

from the forehead of a semi-divine lady of the name of Lawapari. The saint adopted the child and named him Lawa. In course of time 'Lawa' became corrupted to 'Lohar,' meaning a blacksmith.

As in the case of the other stories this one also has an alternative version. In this Tinkhi Maharaj is described as a blacksmith—not a saint—and the founder of the Gadiya Lohars. But, of course, the story does not end here. The oriental mind abhors an unembroidered tale, be it literature or merely sworn evidence before a court of law. It goes on to tell how Tinkhi Maharaj found his trade a highly lucrative one—all the rust from his iron turning to gold in the melting pot.

Now, as everyone knows, gold is heavy stuff, and it fell to the lot of Sujni, the wife of Tinkhi Maharaj, to have to carry the gold on her head. For a time she did not complain, but later she discovered that her hair was getting thin on top, from the weight and friction of her burden.

It so happened that god Shiva and his consort Parvati visited them one day. Sujni asked a boon of Parvati—that henceforth she should be spared from having to carry this 'waste product' from her husband's smelting. The boon was granted, and, in proof of the story, the Gadiya Lohars affirm that, except for ash, no particle remains of iron or fuel after their melting operations are completed.

Another account of the origin of these people links up the story of the sack of Chittorgarh with divine intervention by god Shiva and his wife Parvati.

When the Emperor Akbar entered the fort of Chittor, he ordered a general massacre. By chance, shortly afterwards, Shiva and Parvati passed over the hill. Shiva was surprised to see no sign of life in such a large city, and sent Parvati to investigate.

She wandered for a long time through streets strangely silent, but could find no living being. At long last she came across a new-born Rajput boy, lying in a cupboard. She took the babe back to her lord and told him all she had seen. In pity for the child Shiva turned him into a blacksmith, hoping that, thus changed, he might escape the ruthless destruction which the Moghuls were meting out to all Rajputs at that time. When the boy grew up, Shiva equipped him with an anvil, a hammer and tongs—tools made by his own hand. In support of this story the Gadiya Lohars still quote the Hindi couplet given earlier in this chapter, as proof of Shiva's intervention in their affairs.

Since that time Shiva has been worshipped as the 'Guru,' the Preceptor of the Gadiya Lohars, and Parvati as their 'Yoga Maya,' the Heavenly Mother.

The Lohars of India, as a body, claim descent from Visvakarma, the architect and craftsman of the gods, the fashioner of all ornaments, the most eminent of artisans. He it was, who brought forth, from fire, the anvil, the bellows, the hammer and the tongs and gave them to the blacksmiths, and taught them their trade. This noble man was a Brahmin and, for wife, took the daughter of an Ahir, a damsel of outstanding beauty, who, in a previous birth, had been a favourite dancing-girl of the gods. By her he had nine sons, who, in their turn.



became the ancestors of the various artisan classes of India, such as the goldsmiths, the blacksmiths and so on.

The Gadiya Lohars of Chittor agree quite cheerfully that they also owe their origin to Visvakarma. Asked how they reconcile this with the other stories, they shrug their shoulders. "Perhaps the Panchayat can explain," they suggest and decline to discuss the matter further. But the 'Panchayat,' consulted later, could throw no light on the subject.

This admission about Visvakarma leads me to presume for the Gadiya Lohars of Rajputana a common origin with the other Lohars of India.

At least two sub-sects of the Gadiya Lohars of Chittor exist. The first have settled in Bodha village and are known as 'Bodhan.' The second are called 'Dabi,' and profess to be followers of a saint who cut sods of 'dab' grass, uttered some enchantments over them and threw them into the lake at Abu. The sods took human form and became the progenitors of the 'Dabis.'

And here ends the collection of quaint stories which it has been possible to collect. They have been faithfully recorded as given to us.

"Well, well, well!" you may say. "How on earth is a serious investigator to separate the kernel of truth from the husk of legend?"

The question is perhaps understandable, but, after a good many happy hours and days spent in trying to unravel similar mysteries in India, I am satisfied that, given a sieve of appropriate mesh, it is usually possible to sift out the poetry

from tradition and to obtain a residue of fact. Let us try to apply such a process to these conflicting stories.

The first point that is clear is this. The stories told by these people concerning their origin vary greatly. This can be explained, I suggest, by the addition of local colour, the exact shade of which depends on the locality within which any given group wanders. As will be learned later, these localities are strictly limited. In some cases, indeed, local colouring has been laid on with so heavy a hand that the original story is almost unrecognizable.

The general high importance attached to Tinkhi Maharaj, Aie Lacha and Khetla, as members of the Gadiya Lohars' pantheon, argues that, at some time or other, there must have lived persons of these names and that they were, in some way or other, intimately connected with the Gadiya Lohars. The tradition so deeply embedded in the minds of generations requires that we admit this much at least. Possibly Tinkhi was really a Tinker and the founder of the sect. Beyond stressing these probabilities, however, it would be rash to attempt to be too definite.

As for Gadiya Lohars claiming to be Rajputs, there is nothing startling in this: many humble tribes and castes do the same. From my own knowledge I can instance, in Rajputana, the Jats, Kohls, Minas, Bhils and Daroghas as claimants to a common descent from, or close affinity with, the progenitors of the present ruling class in this Agency. In fact, one might at first sight dismiss this phenomenon as of no more significance than that now observable in Britain, where Mr. Smith likes to see his letters addressed—

to : Smithe Esquire (spelt with an E, my dear !). Ever since Colonel James Tod wrote his famous book 'Rajasthan,' the name 'Rajput' has been popularised to signify widely all that is chivalrous, and the hall-mark of social dignity.

On the other hand, there may be a substratum of truth in these claims. It is by no means impossible that, out-casted for some social crime or hounded by invading hordes from the north, many Rajputs joined roving bands and forest-dwelling communities, such as the Gadiya Lohars or the \*Bhils. Instances of this may well have been Ugam Singh and some of his followers who managed to escape the general massacre at Chittorgarh ; or Rilmal Singh, the father of Aie Lacha ; or both Ugam Singh and Rilmal Singh, for adversity makes strange bed-fellows. In this connection it is interesting to recall the belief held by some writers on the subject that European Gypsies came originally from India and were Rajputs. The fugitives who remained in India may have taken to wife (or to bed) daughters of their humble protectors, and thus infused into them a modicum of †Rajput blood. But, even if this is true, it does not, of course, justify any claim by the Gadiya Lohars to Rajput *origin*.

And now, before attempting to summarize the possibilities as to the true origin of the Gadiya Lohars, let me record a recent conversation.

A few months ago I was standing on the battlements of Chittorgarh, looking eastwards

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\* The Marwar State Census Report for 1911 instances two cases which corroborate this view. Rajputs, in times past when that State was troubled by foreign inroads, are said to have joined Malis and Bambhies : their descendants remained members of these castes.

† Further endorsement for this possibility will be found in Chapter IV—Marriage

out over the plain. With me was a guide, with whom a little earlier I had been discussing the Gadiya Lohars.

Said the guide: "The ancestors of the Gadiya Lohars were not in this fort, when it was sacked."

I looked at him with some surprise and asked: "Then where were they?"

"They lived in a village over there." He pointed to a site a few miles away. "It is still known as Lohargarh."

"Why did they leave?"

"For fear of the Mahomedans and also in disgust at the brutal massacre of a large number of Brahmin priests."

"I see.....And they vowed not to return till the glories of Chittor were restored and the Mahomedans punished for their impious crime."

"I believe that to be the truth."

I looked around at the fortification and palaces, and away towards one quarter where a number of people have again taken up their residence.

"It seems to me," I said, "that the glories of Chittor *have* been largely restored and that the Moghul Empire *has* been overthrown. Why should not the Gadiya Lohars return now?"

The guide smiled.

"Probably because they haven't thought of it," he suggested, "or are so set in their ways that they don't want to."

Thinking over his words, it seems to me that they fit the facts satisfactorily. Shorn of imagery and fantasy, truth begins to emerge naked and unadorned, so that I feel emboldened to state the probable origin of the Gadiya Lohars of Chittor to be this.

Five centuries ago (or more perhaps) a wandering blacksmith, Tinkhi the Tinker, arrived with his family at Chittorgarh in the hey-day of that city's glory. Finding there ample work to provide their needs, they gave up wandering, and settled down near the city, in a village which became known as Lohargarh. In the course of time the original family expanded greatly: possibly also other blacksmiths, such as the 'Dabis' mentioned earlier, joined this settlement, attracted by golden opportunity and the pleasures of a settled life. These skilled workers in iron were employed by the rulers of Mewar, and became much attached to their patrons.

One day, far across the plain, they saw long, lazy clouds of dust hanging in the air; and soon the dread tidings reached them that a Moghul army was approaching. Terror stricken, they fled to the shelter of the jungle.

The Moghuls invested the fort and bitter fighting ensued. Some weeks later, the watchers in the jungles saw inky smoke and red flames of destruction rising from the long hog-back of the hill-fortress. They waited till the enemy had departed and then returned to see the havoc wrought. Everywhere was death and destruction; but what shocked them most was the desecration of the temples and the massacre of Brahmin priests.

In sullen anger at this outrage and in the knowledge that their livelihood was gone, they packed what remained of their possessions and left. Then it was that they took an oath, as they heard their Rana had done, never to re-enter Chittorgarh till its glories were restored and the Mahomedans punished for their sacrilege.

As the years passed this oath seemed to bind the little community more closely together, despite their wanderings. Annual meetings were organized, when social functions such as marriages and funeral feasts were performed, and a 'panchayat' of five elders was set up, to settle disputes among them; till in the end they almost forgot their kinship with all other wandering blacksmiths of India and became a close-knit and separate community. Now and then in the earlier days, a Rajput, flying from Moghul oppressors, might seek sanctuary among them, and they, for the love and respect they bore for the Rajput princes of Chittorgarh, would take them in and make them full-fledged members of their tribe.

This I believe to be as nearly a correct account of the Gadiya Lohars of Chittor as it is possible to reach after the lapse of four centuries. As to the position to be assigned in our picture to Aie Lacha and her son Khetla, I can only repeat the suggestion that Aie Lacha was, in some way, connected intimately with one or other of the Rajput recruits who joined the Lohars' ranks. Suttees have always made an enormous appeal to the Indian mind, and it may be presumed that the Gadiya Lohars would not be unwilling to incorporate in their own tribal records such an embellishment, even though it concerned them only indirectly.

## CHAPTER II.

### ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL ASPECTS.

IN THE LAST CHAPTER, IN MORE THAN ONE place, the name 'Gadiya Lohar' has been qualified by the words 'of Chittor.' It is desirable, once more, to emphasize that, although the subjects of this study may have originally been indistinguishable from the Lohars who are to be found wandering in carts or settled throughout India, those who are descended from the fugitive blacksmiths of Chittor have crystallized into a separate and clearly defined sect. As far as my information goes, they rarely, if ever, leave the confines of Rajputana and do not marry outside their own community. On the other hand, I have never come across any Gadiya Lohars in Rajputana other than those who claim descent from the Lohars of Chittorgarh. They appear to have a monopoly of their trade there. Ordinary Lohars—i.e., those who have a fixed domicile—are of course common throughout the States of Rajputana and in Ajmer-Merwara.

When the Gadiya Lohars of Chittorgarh took to a wandering life after the sack of that place, they were not creating any innovation. Wandering Tinkers have been in existence in India certainly for centuries, possibly from time immemorial, and this is the reason why.

Cities and towns in India, till quite recent times, were few and far between. The vast majority of Indians have always been small farmers, living in little, scattered villages. In few of these was to be found full-time employment for a blacksmith. Consequently, many

blacksmiths wandered from village to village in search of work. Often, however, they confined their wanderings to a limited area and kept to a specific route, thus assuring to themselves a regular clientele.

By reasons of almost unbroken nomadism, of the danger of leaving their women and children unprotected, and of the need of additional hands to work the bellows, collect scrap-iron, etc., the \*practice grew up of taking their families along with them and of relying almost entirely on their carts for protection against the elements. They ceased entirely, in fact, to own houses. When a roof happened to be available they had no objection to sleeping beneath it; it was only in the case of those descended from the fugitives from Chittor that this luxury was forbidden; and this was due solely to the †oath they had taken.

Thus, within the fold of 'Lohars' grew up the special sect of 'Gadiya Lohars,' and thus, within the fold of 'Gadiya Lohars' arose the separate community of the 'Gadiya Lohars of Rajputana.'

In the past these Wandering Blacksmiths undoubtedly found sufficient work to enable them to earn, if not a large, at any rate a sufficient income for their simple needs. Their main work was the making and repairing of agricultural implements, and the forging of metal work for carts and tools for village carpenters or weavers.

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\* It is an interesting sidelight on this practice that, in some parts of Rajputana, it is not considered decent or proper for a man, who has to leave his home on business even of considerable duration, to take his family with him. If he does so, he is sometimes referred to contemptuously as a 'Gadiya Lohar'.

† Expressed in the words 'Undha khat galjo aur phurta in murjo' ('Turn your bed upside down and die a wanderer')



Occasionally professional burglars might engage them to make 'sabaris,' the chisels required by them for breaking open doors and windows. Payment was usually a small share of the grain at harvest time.

But the Gadiya Lohars have now fallen upon evil days. Cheap machine-made tools and spare parts for agricultural implements can be purchased in almost any little town; motor transport is taking the place of ox-drawn carts; and hand-crafts in general are rapidly being ousted by factory-made goods. Their condition to-day is often pitiable.

In the past these people had a reputation for fine craftsmanship. To-day most of what they produce—sickles, axes, knives, pans, bolts, nails, etc.,—is crude and unsaleable at any profitable figure. Those who still own oxen wander round, dirty, ill-clad, often hungry and eking out a miserable existence. Others have become fixtures, outside towns. One such settlement is to be seen near Ajmer. Its inhabitants still cling to their carts, but these no longer can be moved. Either there are no oxen to pull them, or the wheels of the carts are rotten with age, and the owners have no money to buy oxen or even wood for repairs. Is it any wonder that many of these wanderers have turned to other means of livelihood?

Professional castrators are regarded in India with abhorrence. In part this is due to the Hindus' reverence for the bull and cow, but, more generally, I think, to the nauseating cruelty of the castrators' methods. I would like to see it made a heavily punishable crime to castrate otherwise than by the Burdizzo scissors. This new method is effective, clean, painless and

inexpensive. The time-honoured method used in India is unspeakably ghastly. Let me describe it.

The victim is roped and thrown to the ground. One man sits at the beast's head, another near its tail. A flat stone is placed under the testicles, which are then pounded by another heavy stone. In its agony the beast screams and writhes. The pounding goes on till the man at the head announces that the beast's teeth are loose—loosened by unbearable pain. Not till this stage is reached is the operation considered to be complete.

I once begged a rich Marwari, who proposed to spend a large sum in charity for cows, to buy a supply of Burdizzo scissors and to maintain a staff of itinerant operators. Though fully cognisant of the necessity for cultivators to have castrated animals for plough and draft purposes, and of the barbarous methods employed in castration (he admitted this), he refused to consider my suggestion. "Castration," he blandly explained, "involves the maiming of an animal sacred to the Hindu faith. I cannot do anything to further such ends."

I hate bigotry which, ostrich-like, buries its head in the sands and refuses to look unpleasant facts in the face. It would have given me the greatest pleasure to have been able to hand that Marwari over to the Sathias for attention!.....But I am digressing.

I have mentioned these matters because it is alleged that a number of the Gadiya Lohars of Rajputana have turned to this detestable business as a side-line to their age-old profession, and because the popular belief that they have done so

has had repercussions which will have to be referred to later. Asked as to the truth of this allegation, most of them stoutly deny the imputation. Their dealings in oxen are limited, they aver, to buying and selling cattle. A few admit they assist the Sathias, the recognized caste of castrators, but deny that they do the operation themselves. The evidence, however, is overwhelming that, often and often, a bull is purchased by a Gadiya Lohar in the evening, and is found to be an ox by morning. To such depths has poverty forced this once proud people.

In Marwar and Bikaner are to be found a considerable number of Gadiya Lohars, who, forsaking the road, have settled down, during the last half-century or so, and become householders. Those of them who still continue the profession of blacksmiths are said to be good workmen and to be able to find ready employment in railway shops or industrial plants. Others have become farmers, watchmen and even domestic servants. Their economic condition is greatly superior to that of those who still wander. They receive regular wages, dress better, are more cleanly in their persons and are said even to be sending their children to school.

So much for the economic aspect of the Gadiya Lohars. We may now proceed to consider their social condition.

As a whole they are regarded in Rajputana as "untouchables." They are not permitted to draw water from the village wells, nor to enter Hindu temples or other sacred places. Precisely why this should be is difficult to understand, especially when we learn from W. Crooke that, in Bihar, Brahmins will take water from Lohars and many Rajputs will eat 'pakki' cooked by

them. Possibly the suspicion that the Gadiya Lohars of Rajputana perform castrations may be the underlying reason. Added support is lent to this theory by the fact that those of them who have settled in Mewar and Marwar are nowhere, I am informed, subject to these disabilities.

Those who still wander—by far the greater number—are strikingly attached to their old ways and adverse to any suggestion of change. The idea of education is anathema to them. They take a fanatical pride in blind adherence to 'the oath,' and regard modernistic trends as evidence of degeneration—sad to see in other castes, but to be shunned as the devil in their own case. Every effort is made to discourage such trends. As an example of this the case may be quoted of a few young Gadiya Lohars who, tired of a fruitless struggle against impossible odds, decided to accept work in the Loco. Workshops at Ajmer. By ill chance one of them got caught up in revolving machinery and seriously injured. This was held to be a sign of the wrath of Aie Lacha, the Sati, and the rest of the young men were persuaded to resign at once. They held, too, the firm belief that, if they cease to be nomads, the flow of children will dry up gradually till finally the sect will die out. As proof of this they point to the relatively smaller families produced by those who have settled down in Mewar and Marwar. They nurse the most intense hatred for Mohamedans in general, though they appear to have some respect for Mohamedan Pirs.

For those of their fraternity who have broken away and taken to living in herds they profess the profoundest contempt, referring to

them as the 'Chhoti Nyat'—'the lesser community.' They call themselves the 'Bari Nyat'—'the great community.' They accuse them of being renegades and of having abandoned the old faith (Jo dharam brasht hogaye hain). They even taunt them with having adopted Mohamedan dress—a terrible indictment in their eyes. For their part 'the renegades' appear to admit their impiety, for they refer to members of the 'Bari Nyat' as 'those who go on their religious rounds.'

Apart from this ultra-rabid conservatism which marks them so indelibly, they have other ideas and manners peculiar to them. For instance, no additions to their fold from other castes is tolerated, at any rate nowadays. This is strange since, generally speaking, nomadic peoples are usually quite ready to grant membership to those who wish to join them; especially to women who have been deserted. The Gadiya Lohars resist even this latter temptation. Then, no member of the sect ever possesses a bucket and rope, with which to draw water from a well. They depend entirely on water being given to them, where a pond or tank does not exist. Whether the marked lack of cleanliness in their persons is due to insufficient supplies of water, or their failure to carry means of drawing water comes from an aversion to washing, is not easily determinable. Certainly they are as dirty and unwashed a crowd as could be found anywhere. Their explanation for their griminess is simple—their job is a dirty and a continuous one; it is just waste of time to get clean, if, a little later, you have to get dirty again!

Their 'Khats' (beds) must always be turned upside down when carried on a cart. The





explanation for this is not forthcoming, but would appear to have some distant and hazy connection with Rana Pratap's vow not to sleep in comfort till Chittorgarh was restored.

Another distinctive feature of the community is, that interest must never be charged on a loan made to another member of the sect. This rule has been broken, so they say, by those who have given up wandering: yet another proof of their degradation.

Then the carts of the Gadiya Lohars are of a peculiar shape. It is difficult to describe them; but they are higher and longer than the usual country cart, darker in colour and frequently ornamented with iron or brass. They are objects of worship, even those who have settled clinging to carts they no longer require with superstitious veneration.

Lastly they are forbidden on pain of dreadful consequences to enter or even approach Chittorgarh.

In appearance they are wiry, dark-skinned, almost black, and have high cheek bones and thick lips. Practically all the men grow beards. As far as clothing goes, there is nothing to distinguish them from other members of the poorer classes. The men wear a \*red and white turban, a 'bakhrai' and a 'dhoti'; the women a 'ghagra' of spotted 'cheet', a 'kanchli' and an 'orni'. Both males and females at all ages usually go about barefooted. Those who have settled often wear shirts, coats, trousers and shoes and part their hair. All are meat-eaters and partial to intoxicating drinks. As a com-

\* This is the declared rule of the tribe. So far as my experience goes, however, it is a rule which is more frequently honoured in the breach than in the observance.



munity they do not enjoy a great reputation for honesty or truth, though it is said that the Nomads are better in this respect than those who, 'dead to all sense of honour,' have taken to living in houses. But the worst accusations other castes have to make against them are that they are perennially dirty and not above making money by castation.

It is highly probable that the time is not far distant, when this interesting and rather romantic people will disappear entirely from the roads and byways of Rajputana. The process is going on before our eyes. Already some have abandoned entirely the gypsy life; others have come to a stand-still. The rest, in ever-increasing numbers, will be forced, by economic circumstances, to give up wandering; to become merged, finally and indistinguishably, into the poorer classes of the towns or the petty farmers of the villages. And with this change will die all that they now hold dear—their proud spirit that, for the sake of an oath, made them a people apart, ready to brave perils and hardships; the stories told to their children round the camp-fires; and their customs born of a gypsy life.

Or, if this does not come to pass, they must, perforce, sink to be vagabonds and thieves, hunted by all, as are the Kunjars, the Sanasis and those others who form the Criminal Tribes of Rajputana. The force of their present circumstances must prove too strong for them; not for much longer can they remain the pent-up, half-starved people that they are. Change in one direction or other seems inevitable.

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\* Their tradition even forbids them to beg. This tradition is expressed in the words "Murna munzur hai lekhi bhik nahin mangejo." (It is permitted to you to die, but never to beg).

I, for one, cannot help feeling a little sad at these impending changes, but it is clear in which direction the betterment of the Gadiya Lohars lies. I can only be grateful that to me has been given the opportunity of rescuing for posterity this intimate picture of their life before the curtain rings down upon it for the last time.

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### CHAPTER III.

## RELIGIOUS BELIEFS AND CUSTOMS.

OUT OF THE DIM PAST HAVE COME  
TO THE GADYA LOHARS AN INHERITED BELIEF IN  
CERTAIN GODS AND GODDESSES OF THE HINDU PAN-  
theon, but, beyond their names, they appear  
to know little about them. Respect is shown  
to them probably for no better reason than that  
their forefathers did so, long years ago, in and  
around Chittor, or because those among whom  
they wander do so now. These deities are Ram  
Dev, Bhaironji, Pabuji, Balaji, Thakurji, Sane-  
cheryi, Googaji, Rigtiya Bharon, Sheeta Mata,  
Pakhri Mata, Tejaji and the Bai-asas. In addi-  
tion to the Hindu deities, they profess, curiously  
enough, great faith in a number of Mahomedan  
saints.

The Bai-asas and Sheeta Mata are believed  
to combat evil spirits. \*Cowrie shells, dedicated  
to them, are carried on the person to ward off  
evil. The Bai-asas are in addition the censors  
of female morals. Incontinence on the part  
of any wife may bring down the Bai-asas' dis-  
pleasure, in the form of disease or calamity,  
upon the whole family. Balaji, Pabuji and  
Googaji are invoked to secure the blessing of a  
large family, which all Gadya Lohars so much  
desire.

\* The holiness of the cowrie shell, which is also used as small  
currency, lies in its shape, the rounded side male and the curled  
opening on the other side female. This significance even enters harm-  
lessly into games. The betrothed boy and girl will throw a handful  
into the air and if more fall with the underside upwards, then the  
female influence will predominate when the two come to keep house  
together. It is the story of the Celtic, the Cog and the Cwym, the  
hump and the hollow, which have remained so curiously in the Anglo-  
Saxon tongue as indelicate slang. (Quoted from MacAlunan's "The  
Underworld of India.")

Many kinds of trees are objects, if not of veneration, at any rate of fear. Very unpleasant spirits are apt at times to take up their abode in trees, and can only be propitiated by the sacrifice of a pig. On the other hand, an oath, to refrain from killing animals or eating flesh, may sometimes hasten the recovery from sickness of a friend or relation. Another method of assuring recovery from sickness, is to bind a thread round the wrist in the name of \*Rama Pir, and to promise some gift or sacrifice when the patient has fully recovered. In cases of illness also they call in mesmerists, spell-weavers and other charlatans.

Each cart carries its own special Devi (Goddess) in the shape of a rough stone, which is worshipped regularly. This same stone, apparently, can also represent Durga Mata at her festival, the Durga Pujas; or Sheetla Mata, the goddess of small-pox, in whose honour the 'Sheel saptmi' is observed in the month of March each year.

But the list of gods and goddesses would be incomplete without mention of the 'Jal Jognes', the seven goddesses of water. To these are made offerings of goats and sweetmeats. Having regard to the Gadiya Lohars' dislike of water, one may be forgiven for suspecting that, during such ceremonies, the Gadiya Lohars pray with their tongues in their cheeks.

Ancestor worship is regularly performed and contributions paid to the Bhats who maintain

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\* Rama Pir is, I believe, Ramdevji, a deified hero of Marwar, who lived in the XIVth Century and in whose honour an annual fair is held at Runcha in Jodhpur State. At each fair, it is said, a few blind persons obtain restoration of their sight, and a number of sick persons receive immediate healing.

the family records. In connection with this ancestor worship there is a saying current among the Gadya Lohars that: "Life may be lost, one may die of starvation, but determination (to follow in the footsteps of their ancestors) must always go on."

It will thus be seen that the religion of the Gadya Lohars is a mixture of Hinduism and Animism with a liberal sprinkling of belief in the fellowship of certain saints canonized by their sworn foes, the Mahomedans. Surely as muddled a faith as it would be possible to find anywhere!

The religious festivals they observe are those common to all Hindus, such as Dashera, Diwali, Holi, etc. On such occasions married sisters and daughters and their husbands are invited to dine, gifts of clothes are made to these female relations and cash in 'tilak' given to their menfolk.

The most terrible and binding oath that a Gadya Lohar can swear is this: "By the sin of the sack of Chittor." The meaning apparently is that, if the statement made should not prove true, then may he, who has lied on oath, be personally held responsible to God for the sacrilegious murder of the Brahmins at Chittor, whose number can be estimated by the fact that no less than  $74\frac{1}{2}$  maunds weight of sacred threads were taken from their corpses. This oath is taken water in hand and facing in the direction of Chittor.

Other oaths are those sworn by placing a hand on the head of a son; by the sacred cow; by the holy river Ganges or by the goddess Mata.

Omens, upon which the Gadiya Lohars place special reliance, are as follows:—

It is considered auspicious if, early in the morning, a snake or hare is seen to pass from left to right. It is inauspicious to see, first thing in the morning, an oilman, a barber or a person with a squint. If, while starting to do business, a crow flies to the right it is a good omen; if to the left, the omen is a very bad one. The braying of a donkey or the meowing of a cat heard coming from the front is lucky, if from behind, unlucky. The howling of a jackal is always inauspicious. Early in the morning if the right nostril is unobstructed, it is bad; if the left one is working, it is a good omen.

It may be of interest to pause awhile and consider the special import to Indians of the subjects of these omens.

Serpent worship exists throughout India and, while certainly connected with fear of the poisoned fang, yet has a far deeper significance connected with female fertility. Some aspects of snake worship are closely allied with black magic and other such abominations. The hare has gained for itself a special place in the animal world by reason of the fact that the females menstruate each month like a woman. The blood of a hare is held to be a fruitful cure for many troubles. The oilman and the barber are 'Kamin'—those who serve high caste people. The barber is charged to carry out such unpleasant tasks as ear-cleaning, boiling and shaving corpses before cremation. His wife often it is who severs, with a bamboo knife, the navel cord after birth. Hindus have the strongest objection to performing this simple but necessary operation.

As for the crow and the donkey, it is due, I think, merely to their habitual oddities that they have been singled out. The sleek, quick-witted crow, which appears at once wherever man settles or pitches his camp, is possessed of a shameless impudence. Everything living is at times butt or victim of its bullying and thieving. The donkey, on the other hand, as in the West, is looked upon as just a 'silly ass.' Illustrative of how Indians regard it is the saying that a donkey is only happy in famine time. When grass is lush and plentiful it looks around sorrowfully because it can never hope to eat all that nature has provided, in times of famine it looks about and smiles to think that it has eaten everything there is to eat.

Birth, marriage and death have always been inextricably woven into the pattern of the Hindu faith. Marriage, indeed, is a religious duty laid upon every follower of Hinduism, and is regarded as inescapable as death itself. The cycle of a Hindu's life commences at birth, glides into manhood through marriage, and ends with death. Let us now consider this cycle in special relation to the Gadya Lohars. Marriage customs are given a chapter to themselves, due to their importance and to the length of the subject.

### *Childbirth.*

In the case of a first child, custom requires that a daughter return to her parents about one month before the expected date of delivery. Persons who, on account of poverty, are unable to obey this rule, are looked down upon by their caste fellows. The explanation given for this rule is, that a young wife at her first confinement might feel shame in the presence of her father-in-law.

The women of the Gadiya Lohars are said to have little trouble about giving birth. Probably the close-to-nature life they lead explains this. The umbilical cord is cut by a barber's wife. A woman of the tribe acts as midwife and confinement takes place in the cart, over which curtains of 'sirkee' are fixed. No man may approach the cart at this time.

The 'shawad'—the period during which the mother is considered impure and when those attending her have to bathe and change their clothes before eating—lasts as a rule four or five days. During this time the mother is given specially nourishing foods.

If the child be a boy, there are great rejoicings. The midwife receives five seers of grain and one rupee in cash. Remuneration in the case of a girl baby is at a lower rate. On the birth of a son nine seers of a special kind of pudding are prepared and distributed together with wine and meat to caste-men in the name of god Bhaironji. Songs are sung and sacrifices for the safety of the mother and child are also made to various deities. This takes place on the sixth day, when the mother takes a ceremonial bath to cleanse her from impurity. Her clothes on this occasion have to be washed by a Dhobi, who receives the sum of rupees one and annas four in return for his services. Usually, of course, the Gadiya Lohars are too poor to employ a washerman.

On the seventh day the mother with her women friends pays a visit to the nearest well. She carries on her head a jar of water, and cooked grain known as 'ghuri'. After throwing some of the grain down the well to propitiate the water-spirits, the rest is distributed among the children.



Usually on the eighth or ninth day after birth the hair-cutting ceremony of the child takes place, at some Pir's house. The child's looks may or may not be kept, to be placed later at the shrine of some deity for which the parents feel special affection. Should this be done, appropriate sacrifices and gifts are made at the time. Finally on the thirtieth day, the child is given a name. The ceremony is performed by a Brahmin who receives one rupee for his services.

### *Death Ceremonies.*

The Gadiya Lohars cremate the bodies of members of their tribe who die : only in the case of children under six months of age are corpses buried.

Immediately after death, the body is washed, anointed, and all hair shaved off. In the mouth is placed a ball of flour and two small coins tied in a cloth. The body is placed on a bier and carried to the place of cremation. Five round cakes of barley flour ('pind'), each containing a small coin, are placed at the four corners of the bier and one on the chest of the corpse. The object of this can only be explained by the Gadiya Lohars as being enjoined by the Hindu Scriptures. It is probably connected with the idea, current also among the early Egyptians, that the soul requires food during its journey to the next world.

The body is placed on the pyre face downwards. The pile is set alight by the nearest male relative or, in the case of a woman, by her husband if alive and present.

After the cremation, members of the funeral party take a bath for purification, and then go to a temple for prayers. This over, they

accompany the chief mourners back to their cart. Here opium and tobacco are served to them, they are sprinkled with water from the holy Ganges and given leaves of the Neem tree to chew. These leaves are believed to be a prophylactic against possible infection from sickness and disease. Finally, all who attended the funeral are invited to a meal, but etiquette requires them invariably to refuse this invitation. As by custom no cooking can be done by the bereaved family on the day of the funeral, this offer of a meal is purely a symbol of hospitality, well understood not to be taken literally. Food, prepared by friends, however, is sent to the cremation ground and placed, for the use of the spirit of the departed, on or close to the spot on which the body was burned. This provision in the case of a child takes the form of milk, and is continued for seven days.

For two days the close relatives of the deceased are left to their mourning. Then, on the third day, the bones and ashes from the cremation ground are collected and buried in a deep hole. More rarely they are taken and thrown into the Ganges. In this case the chief mourner is expected to expend a considerable sum on a feast to all members of the sect, a feast which continues for three days, and the menu for which is extravagant and carefully prescribed by custom. As few Gadiya Lohars are in a financial condition to expend the sums involved, it is more usual to simply bury the remains. But woe betide the person who takes the relics to the Ganges and thereafter fails to provide a feast. He (or she) becomes the butt of everyone's derision.

On the third day also, a funeral feast (Mansar) is usually given. At this feast dishes

prepared from flour and sugar (Lapsi) are served to all caste-fellows. Anything left over from the feast is given to the dogs. Occasionally old people give this feast in honour of their own approaching death. Custom forbids persons who have done this from attending the funeral feasts of others: they receive, however, a portion of food and eat it in private. In the case of the death of a young man, rice and pulse are served in place of flour and sugar, but these are only eaten by children or cows.

When no funeral feast has been given, the \* 'Sradh' ceremony is observed on the 15th day of the dark half of the month. On this occasion cows are fed. But, unlike other Hindus, the Gadiya Lohars only keep the 'Sradh' in cases where no funeral feast has been given. For all these ceremonies the service of a Brahmin or a Pujari of Saneechari is engaged.†

Mourning lasts for twelve days, during which bereaved persons may not dance or sing, wear any pagri but a white one and may not attend any marriage parties. On the twelfth day a barber is called in and all who attended the cremation must submit to having their heads and faces shaved. On the thirteenth day, relatives serve the family of the deceased with 'Lapsi' and wine. This is to indicate that mourning is over. All caste-fellows drink wine from the same cup.

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\* The 'Sradh' ceremony is only performed for a father, mother or grandparent (paternal or maternal).  
 † In common with other Hindus, if no Brahmin or Pujari is available, the ceremony can be performed by a sister or any of her issue since these are deemed to be equally as holy as Brahmins

## CHAPTER IV

### MARRIAGE.

BETROTHAL AMONG THE GADIYA LOHARS USUALLY takes place at an early age. Indeed, it is not unknown for children to be betrothed before they are born. This is known as \*‘Pet men sagai kurna’. Matrimonial alliances within the † ‘gotras’ of father, mother, or maternal grandfather are not permitted on the grounds of consanguinity. The young people, of course, have no say whatever in the choice of their life-partner, but this is usual in the East, except among the very emancipated. As an Indian friend put it to me: “The difference between West and East is this. In the West you marry the girl you love; in the East we love the girl we marry.” There is a good deal to be said in favour of either system.

The ‘Gotras’ of the Gadiya Lohars are, in many cases, named after Rajput tribes. Instances are :—Chohan, Sankla, Solunkhi, Parikhar, Rathore, Gehlot, Sesodia and Bhati. At first sight this might appear to substantiate their claim to Rajput origin. Actually, I suggest, the exact opposite is the case, for the son of a man of Bhati gotra by a wife of Rathore gotra may not marry a girl of the Rathore gotra. Thus the Gadiya Lohars follow ordinary Hindu custom and not the distinctive Rajput rule. It seems probable that these ‘gotras’ arose from fugitive Rajputs who joined the Gadiya Lohars, temporarily or permanently, and had issue, legitimate or

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\* To betroth while in the belly

† The term ‘Gotra’ means a group of persons among whom inter-marriage would be regarded as incestuous

otherwise, by Gadlya Lohar women, and that the fruit of these unions took, as a distinguishing mark, the tribal name of the male parent.\* It may be mentioned here that a similar nomenclature of 'gotras' exists among the Bhils, and, apparently, with no more significance.

When the parents or guardians of a boy hear of a suitable match for him, they make an offer to the parents of the girl. If the offer is accepted, a date is fixed for the betrothal.

On the appointed day the parents of the boy and their friends go to the girl's home. They take with them a sum of Rs. 21 and also half of the settled bride-price, if they can afford to do so. If not, this sum may be paid at any time before the actual marriage takes place. It is open to the boy's parents to pay the full bride-price at the time of betrothal, should they wish to do so.

In older days the maximum bride-price was fixed at Rs. 84. Less might be agreed upon, but never more. Nowadays it is left entirely to the parents of the boy and girl to fix the amount that shall be paid, but no parent would ever agree to giving his daughter without some price, though it is understood that the whole amount received shall be spent in the marriage, and no part of it retained by the girl's father.

Custom and the Panchayats have decreed how this sum of Rs. 21 and the agreed half-share

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\* Another explanation has been suggested to me. Some other castes, with absolutely no pretensions to Rajput origin, have gotras bearing Rajput names. It is stated that these gotras were originally named after Gurus, who were the religious preceptors of both the Rajputs and the other castes. The same thing may have occurred in the case of the Gadlya Lohars.

of the bride-price shall be expended. The following are the details:—

*The Rs. 21.*

Rs. 16 is to be spent on entertaining members of the tribe.  
 Re. 1 is for wine.  
 Re. 1 is for coloured water to be sprinkled over the guests (c. f. confetti at Christian weddings).  
 Re. 1 is for remunerating the women who sing at the ceremony.

Re. 1 is for purchasing a ring for the prospective bridegroom.  
 Re. 1 is to be left on the plate off which the boy's father eats.

*The half bride-price.*

Rs. 14 is taken by the Panchayat for general entertainment.

Re. 1 is for the \* 'tilak' expenses of the prospective bridegroom.

Re. 1 is for purchasing a new shirt to be presented to the prospective bridegroom.  
 Rs. 5 is for a blanket to be presented to the boy's father.

Rs. 5 is for a new dress (ghagra) to be presented to the boy's mother.

Any unexpended balance is taken by the girl's father for expenditure in entertaining guests who attend the ceremony.

Putting the 'tilak' on the forehead of the bridegroom is of great importance. If this

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\* 'Tilak' is a mark made with coloured earth or unguents on the forehead and between the eye-brows.

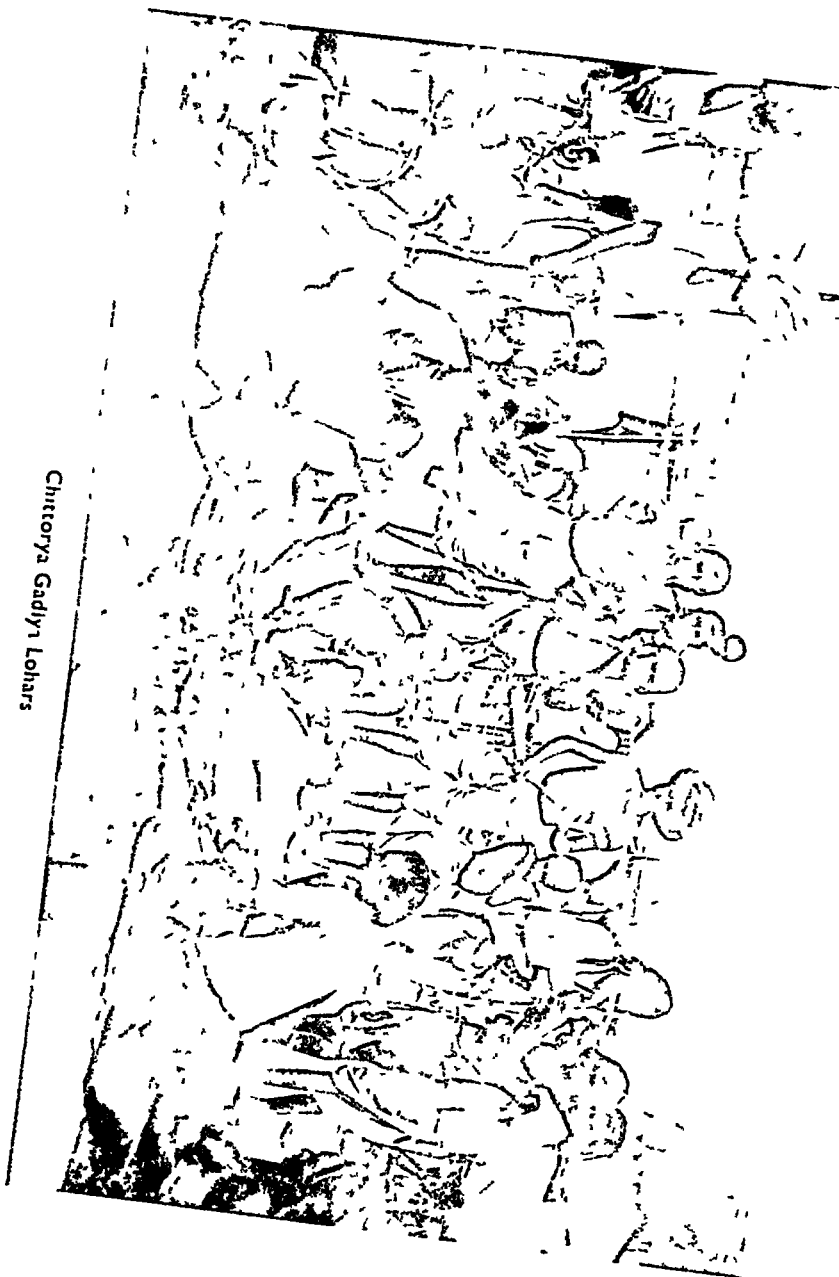
ceremony is, for any reason, omitted and the girl dies before marriage takes place, her father must return the bride-price received. Provided the ceremony has been carried out, the loss, in case of the death of the girl, falls on the boy's father.

So much for betrothal.

When the parents of the boy and girl think the time is approaching when marriage should be performed, they consult the members of the Panchayat. These fix an auspicious date for the ceremony. The boy's father takes a piece of string and ties a knot in it for each day till the auspicious day fixed. Thus, if the wedding is to take place seven days ahead, he ties seven knots in the string. From the next day, one knot daily is untied; the last knot is opened on the day of the wedding.

From the day the first knot is untied, the marriage ceremonies are deemed to have commenced. In their respective homes the boy and girl are each day seated on a wooden bench or chair. They are dressed in new clothes and their bodies massaged with a mixture consisting of flour, butter, water and saffron. Women sing auspicious songs to them and their friends invite them to dinners. It is usual also during these days to make a cash collection among all members of the tribe towards the expenses of the wedding. The justification for this seems to be the idea that marriage of its members is a matter which concerns all, since by marriage the tribe's strength is maintained and renewed.

On the \*night before the date fixed for the actual wedding, the parents and relations of



Chittorya Gadhyi Lohars





both the bridegroom and bride keep awake, and devote the hours to worship of their family gods.

The next morning the marriage party collects. Before setting out, the bridegroom's father serves the party with a meal consisting of rice and meat. Just before leaving rather a curious custom is observed. The mother suckles the bridegroom in public. The significance of the action is that, the boy now being about to acquire the status of manhood and assume worldly responsibilities, the mother for the last time asserts her rights and satisfies her maternal instincts. The custom is known as 'Boba dena.' In the absence of the mother, the step-mother, elder sister or other female relative enjoys this privilege. Thus it happens at times that a grey-haired bridegroom, going for re-marriage, may be seen being suckled by quite a young girl. The party takes with it gifts for the bride. These usually consist of ornaments and clothes, the 'Bari' as they are called, and sweets and toilet articles ('Parla').

Arrived near to where the bride is living, the party halts and a barber is sent forward to acquaint the bride's father of their arrival. A carpet is spread, on which the party rests. When the bride's friends and relatives come to receive them, they are regaled with opium, betel-nut, tobacco, and wine. All remain there till the evening, when the groom's party is conducted to the bride's place.

At the entrance to the place where the marriage is to be solemnized an arch is erected. From this hangs a metal shield, the 'Toran'. Among fighting castes this 'Toran' is struck by the bridegroom with a lance, and signifies the forcing of the gates, reminder of the days when

brides were won by capture. Among the Gadya Lohars the custom is to strike the 'Toran' with a 'Bori'—a thin stick which must have been recently cut, by a single blow, and must not have been allowed to touch the ground till the ceremony is over.

Just before the 'Toran' ceremony, the bridegroom is presented with an earthenware pot in which barley grains have been sprouted. He throws a coin into the pot and then breaks it. This is supposed (by what reasoning I was unable to learn) to bring good luck.

The 'Toran' ceremony over, the bridegroom is required to sit on a charpoy. He is offered a plate of barley-flour mixed with butter, in acknowledgment of which he touches the plate and then his forehead. Before he can partake of the delicacy, someone of the bride's party pours water over the dish. The bridegroom returns the plate with a rupee in it. This coin is the perquisite of the barber to whom the plate is given to wash. Of this act the significance, again, is not clear. Probably the underlying idea is that the bridegroom should not tarry for anything so material as food, when a lovely and eager bride awaits him.\* He is next subjected to massage by four women, two of whom must be married and two virgins. They rub him over

\* This suggested explanation is supported by the words of the following song which is sung to the bride when, after taking her bath, she is seated on the 'Bajot' awaiting the groom:—

*Her friends .*

Why do you look so sad ?  
Do you want some presents  
Or a garland of flowers ?

*The Bride .*

I want only my mother-in-law's son :  
I want nothing else ;  
Only him whom I love dearly.

with 'Pithi', a mixture of flour, butter, saffron and water, all the while singing to him songs of shocking indelicacy.

'Next, his future mother-in-law approaches the bridegroom. She brings, for luck, a tray on which rests a 'Mathauni'—an instrument for churning milk, and she presents him with a small silver ornament to be worn round the neck, places a 'Tilak' on his forehead and marks his nose with milk, receiving from him one rupee in return. The significance of this last act is apparently much the same as the giving of her own milk by his mother—a reminder that he should respect womanhood and prove himself a loving son-in-law. Lastly she brings a tray containing five small lamps and worships him as the future husband of her daughter.

It is now the turn of the bridegroom's paternal aunt to play her part. She presents him with a necklace plaited from wheat, barley, cocoanut and water-chestnut, which have been soaked in water. She receives the sum of four annas as a present from the bridegroom.

At the auspicious time when the actual marriage is to be performed, the young couple approach the sacred fire. This burns in a shallow pit ( 'havan-khund' ) in the centre of a plot about two yards square and railed off by a cotton thread. They make offerings of ghi, til seed and barley to the gods. Next the 'Bari' and 'Parla', brought by the bridegroom's party, are sent for and the new clothes are put on by the bride. At the same time her palms are anointed with the red juice of the Mehendi shrub. One rupee is given to her to hold and the bridegroom places his hand over hers. Their clothes are then knotted together and they commence to walk seven times

round the fire. Finally, to mark the conclusion of the ceremony, the maternal uncle separates their hands and gives the rupee to the officiating Brahmin priest. They are now man and wife.

The young couple are next conducted to the place whence the bridegroom's party set out that evening. Here some elderly person adopts the bride. This curious custom owes its origin to the Hindu idea that once a daughter is given in marriage, she ceases to be a member of her father's family. She thus finds herself without any persons, alive or dead, whom she can claim as responsible for her birth. To obviate this breach of nature's rule, a new parent is acquired by adoption.

The bride is made welcome in her new family. Money, dates and cocoanuts are given to her, and her father-in-law, placing his hands on the heads of both bride and bridegroom, announces that he has done his duty in providing a wife for his son, and now henceforward they must earn their livelihood in an honourable way. Thereafter the couple returns to the bride's family for the wedding feast.

On the next day there is another feast at which opium is served to all, and the remainder of the bride-price is paid over to the girl's father. Four or five responsible caste-fellows actually make the payment, and so are witnesses that the transaction has been completed. They receive five rupees for their services.

On this day, too, all the bride's presents are exhibited and she puts on her jewellery. It is considered obligatory for every father to give his daughter a dowry consisting of a cow, a bed and bedding, and a number of ornaments. These

last are—bindi, tonti, dora, jhumar and four rings. In addition to 'Bari' and 'Parla' already referred to, the bridegroom's father provides for the bride various articles of female attire and the following ornaments :—an armlet (materia), a gold necklace (timania), a silver wristlet (kankania), bangles (churi), earrings (jhumaria) ear ornaments (jhutna) and a hand ornament (hathphul).

On the third day 'Choorma' is offered to all. This consists of wheat-flour and sugar, baked.

The fourth day is spent by the young couple in worshipping all the local deities and the special deities of the bride's family.

When all these ceremonies have been completed, the bride's father presents the bridegroom's party with a jar, the mouth of which is covered by a red cloth. The jar contains flour baked in butter, and a few 'poories' (unleavened cakes). This gift signifies the 'seekh' (permission to leave).

A procession of all the guests is then formed, and the bridal party escorted to their carts, which await them at some little distance. The songs which are sung at this occasion are special and are known as 'Moria.'

Arrival at the destination is timed to coincide with \*sunset, when another procession is formed and alms distributed to beggars and other poor people. The final ceremony is to seat the bride and bridegroom on each side of the shaft of the cart in the name of Khetla, the adopted son of Aie Lacha. The memory of the Suttee herself is

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\* Actually a little before sunset and at a time when the dust is seen rising from cattle homeward bound. This hour is considered highly auspicious.

recalled by chalking seven lines on a wall. These are known as the 'Maya of Aie Lacha.' A dish called 'Lapsi' is cooked and eaten after arrival. The peculiarity about this dish on this occasion is that it must be prepared from flour supplied by both the bride's and bridegroom's families.

And so concludes the sacrament of marriage among the Gadya Lohars: no doubt the couple lives happily ever after despite the grimness and griminess of their lives. Emphasis must be laid, however, on the fact that the various ceremonies described above should not be taken to be peculiar to the Gadya Lohars. The main outlines, certainly, are common to all Hindus; it is only in certain details that special features are to be found.

The ritual is long and complicated. From this it might be imagined that marriage must have particular sanctity in the eyes of the Gadya Lohars. Inquiry, however, does not justify this view. Quite apart from the reputation of the males of the tribe for gallantry and levanting, they recognize both divorce and widow-remarriage—two customs which are anathema to high-caste Hindus. Marriage among Hindus, at least for the woman, is a sacrament which binds her to her husband, not only for life, but for all future lives also. From this belief arose sutteeism, whereby a widow immolated herself upon the funeral pyre of her dead husband. For a Hindu male to have more than one wife is not uncommon and considered unobjectionable, especially if the first wife proves barren. But for a widow to re-marry, or for either party to be parted in divorce is unthinkable for orthodox Hinduism.

As regards divorce among the Gadya Lohars, the system is simple. A wife, for instance, who

tires of her husband and wishes for another can, if her husband consents, leave him and marry someone else. In this case her price (the bride-price) has to be paid to the late husband, and acceptance of the amount constitutes recognition of severance of all ties.

Widow-remarriage (Nata) probably arose among them from the fact that a widow could hardly wander alone: to find a male protector became a necessity. That, necessary or not, widow re-marriage is considered not quite proper, seems evident from the manner in which the ceremonies are conducted.

A woman becomes, on the demise of her husband, the property of her own parents and not, as would appear more logical, of her deceased husband's family. Thus the bride-price, if she marries again, has to be and is paid to her parents. Cash down before marriage is not insisted upon: re-marriage on the instalment plan is common. Indeed, quite frequently, it is said, the sum agreed upon is finally whittled down considerably by flattery and occasional presents. A widow usually marries a widower.

A widow may only remarry on a Saturday. The parents of the bride entertain friends with 'Choorma,' a mixture of baked flour, sugar and butter. After the meal, the couple slip away to the jungle, where the marriage knot is tied by another widow. The bride must wear her widows weeds for the occasion, and both she and her husband must remain concealed in the jungle till next day; for anyone to see their faces before the next dawn is considered of great ill-omen. The bride-price, if the husband can pay it, is handed over next morning.



On approaching her new husband's cart, the bride must arrive from the rear. In the case of those who have settled she must never enter by the front door, but scale the back wall by a ladder. Her first act after arrival must be to turn the flour grinding stone in a reverse direction. The meaning underlying this could not be explained by anyone: it seems somewhat topsy-turvy.

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## CHAPTER V

### PANCHAYAT ORGANISATION, TRIAL BY ORDEAL, Etc.

THE 'PANCHAYAT'—THE COUNCIL OF FIVE Elders—is a very ancient institution in India. In its clash with the legal system introduced by the British, the old order was in danger of extinction. Happily its rightful claims to survival have at last been recognized and now, in many provinces, efforts are being made to revive it as a factor in village life. As a means of saving time and money to the villagers, and for the settlement of minor disputes, the Panchayat system has much to recommend it. As a training ground for the exercise of civic responsibilities, it has, also, a part to play in fitting India for self-government.

It is interesting, therefore, to find that the Gadiya Lohais have, throughout the centuries, clung to this old system of settling their differences. No Gadiya Lohais, except those few who have broken away from their old life and settled down, ever enter a Civil or Criminal Court of Law, unless forced to do so by the police.

There is now no general Panchayat for the whole sect, but each group of approximately one hundred carts has its own committee of five Elders. Probably or certainly this is a fairly modern improvisation designed for convenience as numbers increased or the area they covered expanded. The fact that the functions and powers of all their Panchayats appear to be identical, argues a common origin.

Matters dealt with by the Panchayats of the Gadiya Lohars can be classified as under :—

- (i) Disputes about social ceremonies such as feasts in honour of the dead, betrothal and marriage.

Examples of these are the refusal to send a girl to her father-in-law although half the bride-price has been paid ; or an attempt to break off a betrothal if another man is ready to offer a higher bride-price. Cases of abduction are also dealt with.

- (ii) Breaches of tribal etiquette.

Any tendency to wear clothes other than those sanctioned by immemorial custom, by members of the tribe is considered an offence. No Gadiya Lohar is supposed to wear a turban unless it be of red and white muslin, but this rule nowadays seems to be honoured more by its breach than by its observance.

- (iii) Cases of moral lapses.

Under this head is included the offence : ' Koi ata sata karle to '. I had some difficulty in determining exactly what was meant by this term, since it appeared to have no connection with the usual meaning as understood among Marwaris and other people of Rajputana. In the end I was able to confine its scope to the taking of a daughter in marriage from a family to which

a daughter had been given in marriage, a practice which is considered most shameful. Any lapse from adherence to the rule that forbids this practice is punished by excommunication from the tribe. The reason why this practice is regarded with such disfavour is that he who gives a daughter to another may not touch anything (even water) in the house to which she has gone. He cannot, therefore, be considered eligible to receive any gift : far less the gift of a girl in marriage.

- (iv) Non-payment of inter-tribal debts or the dues of the Panchayat.
- (v) Contempt of the Panchayat.
- (vi) Any other matters in which the Panchayat's influence can be exercised.

The usual punishments which can be awarded are as follows :—

- (i) Making forced contributions to charity. This is called 'Kabutero ko sawai rupia ka mukki ulba' : To throw down Re. 1/4-'s worth of Indian corn for the wild pigeons.
- (ii) Feeding a number of Brahmins.
- (iii) Providing free opium, betel-nut and tobacco to members of the Panchayat.
- (iv) Giving a feast to members of the tribe.

## (v) Excommunication.

This is called : 'Hukka pani bund'. The term means literally that smoking or drinking with other members of the tribe is prohibited, but it also infers the breaking off of all social relations, such as dining together, inter-marrying, etc. Pilgrimages for purification to such holy places as \*Pushkar or Benares.

This penance is awarded as a punishment in the case of a serious moral lapse or an irreligious act.

Cases of immorality among the Gadiya Lohars are said to be rare. When they do occur they are treated with leniency for the first offence. Repeated lapses, are dealt with severely. For instance, a girl who, despite warnings, continues in her evil ways, may be excommunicated for a period of twelve years. At the end of that period she may be re-instated in the tribe, but the Panchayat usually arranges to marry her off to some male member who has been equally morally lax.

Trial by ordeal still holds favour among these people. Two forms are practised—ordeals by heat and ordeal by water. It is believed that no man, however clever, can deceive the tribal

\* Pushkar is a village on a lake of the same name and near Ajmer. Its waters are the holiest in India and are covered at all times by a thick green slime—the residue of Hindu sins, I presume.  
† This is in accordance with their *own* version. Their reputation in the eyes of the general public is distinctly otherwise.

gods of fire and water, and that, conversely, neither fire nor water will harm an innocent man or woman.

Trial by fire takes the form of having to carry a red-hot ball of iron over a fixed distance. The ball is carried on the palm of the hand, which may be covered by 5 or even 7 layers of leaves of the 'pipal' tree. If the ball is carried the whole distance without being dropped, the carrier is declared innocent.

In the case of ordeal by water, the suspect is required to sit completely covered by water for a definite but limited time. If he lasts out the prescribed time calmly and without coming up for breath, he is proclaimed to be innocent.

The taking of oaths has already been referred to in an earlier chapter.

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## CHAPTER VI

### POPULATION AND DISTRIBUTION OF GADIYA LOHARS OF RAJPUTANA ACCORDING TO CENSUS OF 1941.

The total number of Gadiya Lohars found in Ajmer-Merwara and Rajputana on March 1st 1941, the central date for the Census, was 6,970. Their distribution was as under:—

Ajmer-Merwara	1,129	Marwar State	2,002
Alwar State	206	Karauli State	23
Banswara State	18	Kishangarh State	98
Bikaner State	1,010	Kotah State	249
Bundi State	238	Partabgarh State	71
Danta State	48	Shahpura State	29
Dungarpur State	52	Sirohi State	7
Jajpur State	650	Mewar State	1,091
Thalawar State	49		
		Total	6,970

The only States in which no member of the fraternity was found are the desert State of Jaisalmer, the two Jat States of Bharatpur and Dholpur and the two Muslim States of Tonk and Palanpur. The scattered nature of the villages in Jaisalmer is sufficient to account for that State's unpopularity with the Gadiya Lohars. Bharatpur and Dholpur are at the extreme north-east of the Agency and one would hardly have expected to find them there. But the fact that none were found in the Muslim States, especially Tonk, is significant in view of their traditional enmity with Mahomedans.

The most favoured haunts of the Gadiya Lohars are thus shown to be Ajmer-Merwara, and the States of Marwar, Mewar and Bikaner.

Like most other castes in this area, women number less than the men. Figures for 1941 show that for every 1000 Gadiya Lohar males there are only 899 females.

The figures for Gadiya Lohars, who have given up gypsy life and settled down, are higher than were expected. They are 314 (163 males and 151 females) for Bikaner State and 799 (419 males and 380 females) for Marwar State, making 1113 in all or 19% of the total strength of the caste. No instance of settlement in any other State or District is reported.

Curiously enough the settlement in Bodha village in Marwar, referred to at page 136 of Chapter I, now appears to consist of seven persons only (2 males and 5 females). These people are believed to be the descendants of the *first* Gadiya Lohars who forsook their vows.

As far as it has been possible to ascertain from verbal inquiries, there are no grounds to support the contention of the 'Bai Nyab' that the penalty for settling down is a falling off in the number of children born to the backsliders.

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## SONGS.

IT APPEARS THAT AT NO TIME HAVE THE Gadiya Lohars produced a poet or songwriter of their own. The songs that I have been able to collect from them are in no real sense special to this fraternity: indeed, the Gadiya Lohars seem to have borrowed such of the music and lyrics of Rajputana as appealed to them and then merely to have translated them into their own patois. Some appear to be incomplete, possibly fragments from longer ballads or incorrectly memorised by them.

Singing and carousing are, I discovered, closely associated in their minds. When I hinted at the possibility of monetary rewards for those of them who consented to sing for me, I was given to understand, quite clearly, that a few bottles of country liquor would be far more acceptable. "Who can sing without wine?" they asked, and the tone was such as to imply that the question was purely rhetorical. So wine they were given; and I learned yet one more fact about them—they are possessed of cast-iron heads.

In the following pages literal or metrical translations in English are given of a few selected songs together with explanatory notes. At the outset I had planned to include the Hindi originals also, but lack of space has made this impracticable. Similarly a glossary of words, the use of which appears confined to these people, has had to be omitted.

## I

SPRING SONG (sung during the festival of Holi).

Chitoriya Gadiya Lohars.





The great and popular feast of Holi is celebrated throughout India in the merry month of Rāgun. It is a time of complete licence and resembles the Saturnalia of Rome. The 'Rāgunia' referred to in the song is a coloured dress specially worn for this festival by Indian ladies.

As illustrative of the amount of freedom I have allowed myself, I give for this song a literal as well as a metrical rendering.

Oh husband mine, give me a coloured 'Rāgunia,'  
 To-day, to-day, the month of spring is come  
 A coloured dress, dear husband, bring this very day  
 Give me, husband, a sari, at this very moment, for the  
 month of spring is here  
 Oh. husband mine, give me a silver necklace at once,  
 for spring is here  
 Oh husband mine, give me bangles, at once, for spring  
 is here

The festival of Holi,  
 Which ushers in the spring,  
 Is here again, dear husband,  
 So you your gifts should bring.

In spring the earth is generous,  
 It decks the world anew.  
 Let nature's rule of giving  
 This day be kept by you.

So don't delay or tarry,  
 But clothe me in a gay  
 'Rāgunia' and 'Sari',  
 To-day, to-day, to-day

Add necklaces of silver  
 And bangles as you may,  
 But don't forget time gallops,  
 So bring your gifts To-day

## II

FARFELL (sung on a bride's departure.)

This song deals with two distinct events. The first is the ceremony just before the marriage knot is tied, when the bride is anointed with 'Batna,' a sweet-smelling preparation containing marjoram and oil of jessamine. It is interesting to note that the Gypsy patois converts 'Batna' into 'Gatna';

The second half of the song is a lament by her friends and relations for the departure of the bride. She is likened to a female 'Koyal' (the Indian Cuckoo) probably because that bird is migratory.

The following is a literal rendering of the words:—

Thy mother has mixed the 'Gatna',

Its odour is very sweet,

In it is the fragrance of marjoram and jessamine.

Your father also has helped to prepare and mix it,

And its fragrance is very sweet.

In your mother's heart is much love for you.

Oh, Cuckoo, where are you going?

That new relative of ours, your bridegroom, is

taking you away.

Oh : Cuckoo, where are you going?

Mataji, the Great Mother, is the protectress against all sorts of diseases, small-pox in especial. In this song she is described as "Mother of milk-giving animals—protectress of children." The devotee, in the Hindi, mentions that she has brought "eight and twenty-eight kinds of sweet

## PRAYER TO MATAJI.

## III

preparations " for the goddess, a statement which I have had to change to : Sweetmeats in variety.

Holy Mother, on this day  
I, thy servant, come to pray.  
Please to note I've donn'd new dress  
In thine honour. Please to bless  
All my children Keep them free  
From dread small-pox, Mataji

Holy Mother, bless the cows,  
So that milk abundant flows ,  
Then the children, growing strong,  
Soon may voice their grateful song

Lastly, Mataji, I pray  
Please accept my gifts this day—  
Sweetmeats in variety  
Made by these poor hands for thee

#### IV

#### RAMDEVJI.

Ramdevji belonged to the Tanwar clan of Kshatriyas. The scene of his heroic deeds, which led to his deification, was Runecha, now a railway station on the Phalodi branch of the Jodhpur State Railway. An annual fair is held there to commemorate his deeds of daring. He was a contemporary of another famous and now deified Rathore, Pabuji. The following couplet about Ramdevji and others is often quoted in Marwar :—

Pabu, Harboo Ramdeo, Mangalia Meha,  
Pancho Peer Padharjo Bard Goga Gaiha

Those Gadiya Lohars who wander in Marwar have become devotees of Ramdevji, just as several other castes have done. Here we have an example of the way in which the Gadiya Lohars take on local colour from the songs, traditions and customs of the areas in which they operate.

The Hindi of this song is difficult to construe. It appears to be susceptible of allegorical as well as literal interpretation. For instance, the word 'angan' can mean a courtyard or the soul. The myrtle tree can represent a shade-tree or the symbol of mystic love. Then, though not specifically stated, there are hints that originally the song was written for and sung by Ramdevji's sister. Finally, two lines have been thrown in without apparent rhyme or reason.

Shorn of unnecessary details and allusions, but retaining its mysticism, the essential theme of this song would seem to be capable of expression in the following lines:—

My garden has a myrtle tree—  
 Symbol of mystic love—  
 And, as I sit beneath its shade,  
 Your spirit soars above  
 And, oh - belov'd Ramdevji,  
 You flit from bough to bough  
 Why not descend and settle in  
 The courtyard of my soul?

## V

### THE SUTTEE'S FAREWELL.

The heroine of this song, which appears to be a fragment only, is Sohan Bai. Her father's house was at Udaipur in Mewar, and she had married a Rajput, resident of Chhota Udaipur in Jaipur State. This lady has already been referred to, when considering the Suttees worshipped by the Gadiya Lohars. Her name is unknown to the Gadiya Lohars of Marwar, just as Aie Lacha is unknown to the Gadiya Lohars who operate between Ajmer and Sheikawati. The

song, therefore, represents just another example of the way locality affects the views, customs and beliefs of these people. Incidentally it was explained to me by a Gadya Lohar at Ajmer that Sohan Bai was an ancestress of his and the events described in the song took place long years ago before his forefathers migrated to Chittor. I was not impressed with this story as I happened to know that the district around Chhota Udaipur was not colonized by Rajputs till, comparatively speaking, recent times.

For a full understanding by Western readers of this song, the following explanations may be permitted.

Hindus at the point of death are placed on the ground or floor, in order that they may be resting on Mother Earth. The Bamhis are a low caste, who, in return for general village work, receive the skins of all dead animals. They are credited with the power of blasting away the spells of such earthly menaces as possessors of the evil-eye, sorcerers and witches. They have no power, however, to avert divinely ordained diseases or afflictions.

A widow who has declared her intention to commit Sutee, must bathe, anoint and clothe her person as for a great festival. Decked in all her jewels, she leaves the shelter of the zenana for the first and last time. Once having uncovered her face to the world, she must die. As she goes to the pyre, the crowd presses forward to touch her garments and so obtain her blessing. She gives her jewels to her friends and mounts the pyre. There she sits with her dead husband's head on her lap. That there may be no possibility of her attempting to escape when the first flames scorch her, she is made fast with rods



across her shoulders and knees. Then the pyre is set alight.

Fair Sohan Bai, daughter of Sainsmal,  
Whose home was in famed Udaipur,  
Sat mute by the side of her husband  
Already put down on the floor.

No longer she felt she could bear it,  
His sufferings tore at her heart ;  
She longed for relief from the vigil ;  
She longed on death's journey to start.

Then entered the son of Rao Jodha,  
A friend of her husband, and he  
Felt the pulse, and noticed its flutter.  
" Let's send for the Bambhis," said he.

" It's only with ills caused by witches  
The spells of the Bambhis can vie."  
And Sohan Bai shook her head sadly .  
" God's will is my darling should die "

Then, rising, she offered her husband  
A drink from a vessel of gold,  
And placed within reach his lov'd hookah,  
As done on occasions untold.

One look, long and loving, she cast him,  
Then turning, her eyes lit with fire :  
" Keep guard till his proud spirit passes ;  
I go to prepare for the pyre."

## VI

### BIRTH OF MIRABAI.

According to Sir George MacMunn, Mirabai flourished at Chittorgarh in the 15th century and was a Vishnuvite votary of venery and Shakti, and an ardent preacher of the glories of Krishna, the world's joyous lover, and of the mysteries of Lingam-Yoni. She is regarded as the patroness of courtesans, who frequently bear her name.

The following are but the opening stanzas of a long ballad depicting the whole life of Mirabai.

These, as a study of the mental condition and cravings of a pregnant woman, should be of considerable interest to the medical profession.

The Rani is in her first month of pregnancy,  
Great is her anguish  
The Rani is in her first month of pregnancy;  
She craves for coolth and shade  
The Rani is in her third month of pregnancy,  
She craves for Buller's Earth.  
The Rani is in her third month of pregnancy;  
She craves for a well-spiced dish of goat's meat and rice.  
The Rani is in her fifth month of pregnancy;  
She craves for ghee-less 'lapri' (sort of cake)  
The Rani is in her sixth month of pregnancy;  
She has a craving to eat black coal  
The Rani is in her seventh month of pregnancy;  
She craves for green cocoanuts  
The Rani is in her eighth month of pregnancy,  
She has a longing for dried dates  
The Rani is in her ninth month of pregnancy,  
She rests her heavy buttocks against the castle walls  
On an auspicious day she brings forth a girl—  
Doodia of Alerta has begotten a daughter  
The child's cord is cut with a golden knife,  
Her aunt goes to offer her congratulations,  
Taking with her a brass tray filled with pearls  
The priest goes to congratulate the aunt  
He is welcomed as a 'Dharam Bhai' (Religious brother).  
And undertakes to search the calendars and scriptures  
He chooses the name Jasodha Bai for the child  
He directs also that she be called by a pet-name—Murabai.

The gardenier arrives to offer his congratulations,  
The aunt offers him two golden coins.  
She bids him throw open the gardens to the public,  
And asks him what trees he grows in the garden  
He replies - "Marjoram, Almosa and Sandalwood"  
Last comes the carpenter to congratulate the aunt  
He, too, is welcomed as a Dharam Bhai  
He is asked to make a beautiful cradle for the child.



## **APPENDIX C.**

### **SOME NOTES CONCERNING THE BHILS OF RAJPUTANA.**

## THE BHILS OF RAJPUTANA.

MUCH HAS BEEN WRITTEN ABOUT THE BHILS from time to time and no attempt will be made here to cover well-trodden ground. In this article two matters only concerning these people will be dealt with — matters which came to light or into prominence during the census of 1941, and may crop up again in the future.

Early in 1940, just after I had taken over charge as Provincial Census Superintendent for Rajputana, the well-known Rajputana historian, Rai Bahadur Gaurishanker Ojha, paid me the honour of a visit. He informed me that, in his opinion, Bhils in past censuses had been wrongly classified. He believed that possibly a few genuine Bhils might be found, but that most of them previously classified as Bhils were, in reality, Minas, and a rectification in classification should now be made.

Information from such a source was not to be treated lightly, and certainly my earliest inquiries seemed to confirm the Rai Bahadur's opinion. During a tour through the States of Mewar, Danta, Partabgarh and Dungarpur and, later, of Banswara and Sirohi, the chief strongholds of the Bhils, many of these people were met and asked as to what tribe they belonged to. Here and there a man could be found who admitted he was a Bhil; most of them, however, claimed to be Minas. Even on the way to Kherwada, the headquarters of the Mewar Bhil Corps, pensioners and others from that regiment met on the road or visited in neighbouring villages claimed to be Minas. "This being so, why call it the Bhil Corps?"—I asked them but could get no explanation.

Curiously enough it was a Bhil lady who saved me from accepting this evidence as conclusive of Rai Bahadur Ojha's proposition.

Overtaking on the Kherwada road a small party of people, who looked like Bhils, I pulled up to ask them the usual question. They proved exceedingly stupid, and appeared to be unable to follow our questions. Just then a lady arrived. She stepped forward with a smile and said: "These fellows are junglies and know nothing. What is it you want to know? Perhaps I can help you."

"Thank you, Madam. What I want to know is whether these men here are Bhils or Minas."

"They are Bhils."

"And can you explain why nearly every Bhil one meets calls himself a Mina?"

She smiled knowingly. "That's easy to answer," she replied. "Ever since the Bhils have become Government servants (in the Bhil Corps), they've started to give themselves airs, and to call themselves by the name Mina, which they regard as denoting a better caste than Bhil." She paused then and added: "I'm a Bhil myself, and proud of it, but you will realize that it's a bit sickening always to be called 'Salar Bhil'."

"The scent gets stronger," I told my companions and determined to follow up this clue by a visit to the Bhil Corps as soon as possible. Unfortunately, Major Maxwell, the Commandant of the Corps, was not found at Kherwada that day, and so I had to return to Udaipur.

Thereafter I went to Jai Samand in Mewar and interviewed, on the banks of that lovely lake, a number of Bhils and many Minas also. The latter were quite definite that the Bhils were not Minas. "For," they said, "these Bhils here hunt and eat crocodiles, a meat that no Mina would touch."

The Bhils at first claimed to be Minas, but, when informed of what the Minas had said, took umbrage. Their claim was entirely forgotten. "The Minas said that, did they? Well, we'll tell you about them. The Minas eat the bodies of dead animals. We Bhils would never do so degrading a thing."

I left hastily and before further questioning could lead to a free fight.

The next day I went out to Lacherwas, a village on the plains and some miles from Udaipur. There I found settlements of Minas and Bhils living side by side. As many as possible from each were collected and questioned. I do not know what the Bhils might have said if questioned separately, but, in the presence of the Minas, they readily agreed that they were Bhils and that there was no inter-marriage or inter-dining between the Minas and themselves. Another distinction mentioned was that the Minas were devotees of Kalaji, whilst the Bhils worshipped Mataji.

By this time I was quite convinced that the Rai Bahadur's proposition was incorrect. What I could not understand, however, was how this claim to be something they were not was so widespread among the Bhils. My Bhili friend's explanation seemed insufficient, since the men

in the Bhil Corps are recruited from quite a small area, mainly around Kherwada. So I decided to go again and consult Major Maxwell.

That officer was somewhat surprised to hear that his men, serving or retired, claimed to be aught than Bhils. He called in an Indian Officer and asked him about it.

"Yes," said the Subedar, "Bhils have now for some years been calling themselves Minas, though not while serving." And he went on to explain the circumstances which gave rise to this phenomenon.

"Some time back," he told us, "a political agitator, of the name of Motilal, started a campaign among the Bhils of what he termed 'uplift.' One of the things he advocated was giving up the despised name of Bhil and taking that of Mina instead."

"I remember him," interrupted Major Maxwell. "He caused a great deal of trouble, but finally was arrested and is now under political surveillance at Udaipur. But I never heard till to-day about his advice to the Bhils to change their name."

And so the theory of Rai Bahadur Gaurishanker Ojha was exploded, but I hope he will forgive me for having lighted the fuse. It is not often that he is wrong in matters connected with history, I imagine.

Before the census was actually taken the States were asked to take what steps they considered appropriate to secure a true return of



'tribe' from the Bhils. The following table shows how far these steps were successful:—

# CENSUS OF BHILS OVER LAST THIRTY YEARS.

States	1921.	1931.	1941.	Remarks.
Banswara .. ..	117,401	144,925	170,640	The figures for 1941 exclude Danta and Palanpur, newly incorporated in- to Rajasthan. Figures of Bhils for these two States were 7,529 and 8,601 respectively.
Mewar .. ..	189,151	216,283	211,190	
Other States in Rajasthan .. ..	149,050	171,089	95,201	
Total .. ..	549,531	655,647	733,618	

From the above and from calculations of last twenty years, it seems likely that at least 20,000 Bhils must have returned themselves as Minas in 1941.

Recently Pandit Shivapuri, the Census Superintendent for Banswara State, discussed this trend with the writer. He related how, during his tours, he was much struck by the following discoveries.

He first visited a village named Loharia, situated at some distance from the Mewar border. There all Bhils declared themselves to be Bhils. Continuing his journey westward, towards Mewar, his next stop was at Mota Ghara. In that village the Bhils returned themselves as Minas or Bhils. The last village he visited was Jagpura, which is right on the Mewar border. There every Bhil

returned himself as a Mina. He learned also that not infrequently nowadays Bhils and Minas intermarry.

Further indication of the trend towards fusion of these two tribes was given by changes in leg-rings fashions among the Bhil women.

One of the most distinctive features of Bhilis is the wearing of broad brass leg-rings from ankle to knee. The Minis, on the other hand, wear only a few light anklets. Pandit Shivapuri reports that in these villages, where the Bhils show the greatest tendency to call themselves Minas, their women are also discarding their time-honoured fashion in leg-rings in favour of the lighter and fewer anklets worn by the Minis.

This, of course, is all very interesting and suggests that, in course of time, these two tribes may become indistinguishable. It does not, however, alter the facts of past history or the original separateness of these two peoples. If it goes to prove anything, then it is that in India even backward and non-Aryan peoples are becoming more politically minded, and that the seeds of democracy, for good or evil, have not fallen on stony soil.

THE SECOND MATTER FOR CONSIDERATION IS the much debated problem of whether Bhils should, in the main, be classified as Hindus or as Animists.

It is difficult to imagine such a question being debated in any country save India. Religion is a matter of the heart. It denotes a man or a woman's relation towards his or her Maker. What a person's religion is, therefore, can only be answered by that person and by no one else. The logical approach to the question, then, would be

to ask the Bhil to state his faith ; and that, broadly speaking, was the instruction given to enumerators for the census of 1941.

But, because in the past the variations in the number of Bhils who had returned themselves as Hindus or Animists at each census showed startling ups and downs, and were clearly traceable to the idiosyncrasies of the enumerators rather than to the Bhils themselves, and because there were indications in 1940 of a move to persuade all Bhils to declare themselves as Hindus at the forthcoming census, it was thought necessary to attempt a re-examination of the subject.

With this end in view all States with Bhil populations were addressed and asked their opinion as to whether Bhils (other than those who professed Christianity) should be classified as Hindus or Animists. In every case the reply was : " As Hindus."

It would have been interesting to have been able to follow this matter up and to have given a table showing exactly how many Bhils were returned in 1941 as Hindus, Christians and Animists respectively. Unfortunately war-time economies required that no religion table should be extracted. The figures, therefore, are not available. My impression, however, is that, except for a few converts to Christianity, practically every Bhil, male and female, was returned as Hindu by religion.\*

How far this state of affairs represents the true wishes of the Bhils themselves and how far

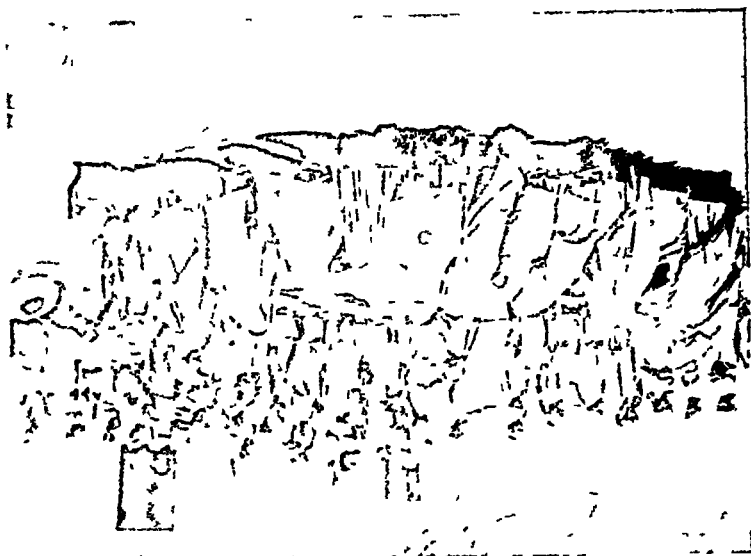
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\* The position is this. Bhils are 44% of all the Tribes. Among the Tribes 1,682,000 returned themselves as Hindus out of a total of 1,716,000. There were only 1,394 Christians, 26,900 Muslims and 5,706 Animists in 1941.

A Bhil Dance



A Bhil Dance





it is due directly to the aspiration of the Hindus to increase their political strength, is difficult to assess. In dealing with illiterate and backward people enumerators not infrequently record answers according to their own lights and without referring to the person being enumerated. A Hindu enumerator with missionary or political urgings is quite capable of returning every Bhil as belonging to his own faith as a matter of course. But this much can be said, that, as far as my personal knowledge goes, most Bhils are desirous nowadays of being recognized as within the folds of Hinduism.

Anyone unacquainted with this curious country might think that there was no more to be said on the subject. Such a conclusion, however, would be very wide of the mark. The question still remains as to what is meant by the term Hinduism, and in examining this some interesting facts emerge.

In the first place it is often said that Hinduism is not a religion at all. Certainly the orthodox members of those people whom the world terms Hindus do not use the word. Their religion is *\*Sanatan Dharam*; what, in fact, is more commonly known as Brahminism. Another writer has defined Hinduism as the whole social structure of the people of Ind or Hind, who follow to some extent the Brahmanical form of teaching, and who are tolerated as part of the structure, however humble.

These 'humble' ones are descendants of aboriginal and non-Aryan folk, who were broken

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\* This term can be translated as 'Original revelation' and the claim that the words involve may rest on a sound historic basis. What later descendants of those to whom the revelation was entrusted have made of it is another story entirely, and one, incidentally, of considerable interest.

up by the Aryan invasion and driven into menial roles in life. Gradually they lost their tribal organisations and came to form the "depressed" and "untouchable" classes, within, yet only on the fringe of, Hindu Society. In the course of the centuries they evolved for themselves the countless castes and sub-castes we find to-day. Originally the Vaisyas, due to their mixed Aryan and non-Aryan descent, were undoubtedly numbered among the humble. Today, curiously enough, they are recognized as well within the portals of Sanatan Dharam and, indeed, are some of its staunchest and most orthodox supporters. There are signs that the "untouchables" may yet gain for themselves a similar elevation in status.

Drawing together the threads of the argument, it may perhaps be stated concisely thus. Among those whom the world knows as Hindus, there are two distinct grades of religion. The first grade is Sanatan Dharam, into which one can (in theory at least) only gain admission by birth and the members of which are limited to the three main Hindu classes—Brahmins, Kshatryas and Vaisyas. The second is Hinduism which requires only some (often nominal) adherence to the Brahmanical form of teaching, and the members of which are tolerated and, as a rule, regarded as "untouchable." In orthodox Hindu eyes those who follow neither Sanatan Dharam nor Hinduism are outside the pale entirely and do not count in any way: it is no concern of the orthodox Hindus as to what weird souls inhabit the earthly shape of Christians, Mahomedans, Animists and the like.

Returning now to the Bhils, let us, in the light of what has already been written, examine their claim to be regarded as followers of Hinduism.

In the first place I will quote a number of reasons, given to me by Miss E. A. Maxwell of the Canadian Mission at Banswara, as to why, in her opinion, Bhils, in that State at least, cannot claim to be Hindus by religion. This lady has spent many years among the Bhils and few people, probably, have such an intimate knowledge of their customs and manners. These were the reasons she gave :—

- (a) They do not, as a regular rule, worship before Hindu idols,
- (b) They do not enter Hindu temples,
- (c) They do not have images or idols in their houses,
- (d) They do not employ Brahmin priests for any of their ceremonies, such as birth, marriage and death, but employ their own Bhopas and Jogis, who are Bhils,
- (e) They believe that on death they become Bhuts (spirits), but they do not believe in re-birth in human or animal form,
- (f) They live in great fear of evil spirits, and most of their religious practices are endeavours to propitiate these spirits, which always seem bent on harming them.

Miss Maxwell, in fact, leaves no room for doubt that the term "Animist" would be the correct one to describe the religion of the Bhils whom she knows so well.

Miss Maxwell has made out a very strong case, but a year's careful investigation of the subject leads me to suggest that there are one or



two aspects of the question which have escaped her notice. I hope she will forgive me for pointing them out.

In the first place Hindus are themselves Animists. It follows therefore that the attribution by the Bhils of a soul to inanimate objects or to natural phenomena cannot in itself be used as an argument for their exclusion from the Hindu fold.

Secondly, there is a mass of evidence to show that the Bhils have since \* long paid homage to some of the Hindu deities, especially Mataji. I agree that this does not signify that they have abandoned their old traditional beliefs. They certainly have not. What they have done, however, to an extensive degree is to graft certain Hindu gods and goddesses on to their own list of objects of worship. Nor is the explanation of this difficult to follow. The Hindus defeated the Bhils so often in the past, that the latter came to the conclusion, that the Hindu gods were more powerful than their own. It was obviously the same idea which prompted an old Bhil to remark to a British Officer after the suppression of the Bhil rising in Mewar: "Since you defeated us, Saheb, I always salaam when I pass a Christian church."

Nor, I suggest, is there really any significance in the fact that the Bhils do not call in a Brahmin priest to conduct their ceremonies. Many other low but recognized Hindu castes do the same—the Kanjars for instance.

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\* In "A Memoir of Central India," Vol II, by J. Malcolm and published in 1824, there is mention of this fact. Also in Danta I was informed that Bhils, for centuries past, had been devotees at the shrine of Amba Mataji. I myself have seen them worshipping at Rakabdevi in Mewar. Pandit Shivapuri assures me that Bhils in Banswara freely attend worship in Hindu temples alongside caste-Hindus.

Perhaps the strongest argument against the inclusion of Bhils in Hinduism is the fact that, although the Hindus have long regarded them as a thoroughly degraded tribe and not to be absolved from the \*detested crimes of cow-killing and of eating carrion, they have never held them to be "untouchable", as they certainly must have done had they considered them within the pale of Hinduism. To appreciate the full significance of this it has to be remembered that to be "untouchable" one *must* be within the warp and weft of the Brahmanical faith, however lowly.

Further weight is given to this argument by the fact that the Sudras, whose ethnologic differentiation from the Bhils is slight, both being aboriginal in origin yet having some admixture of Indo-Aryan blood, are regarded as "untouchable." The explanation for this, however, is I think, fairly clear. The Sudras early lost their tribal organisation and became attached to the fringe of Hindu Society. The Bhils, on the other hand, though in distinct classes, have held themselves almost entirely apart by geographical reasons from Aryan assimilation and have preserved their tribal organisation. This, however, lends no support to the case for their being regarded as proselytes to Hinduism.

What would appear to have happened is this. From the time of the Aryan incursions into India, possibly even before that, the Bhils lived in the forests of south-eastern Rajputana, Central India and Khandesh. They lived as "early man" probably lived everywhere, as dependent on the jungle as the beasts themselves.

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\* Many Bhils have assured me that they have now abandoned these practices, since they are incompatible with Hinduism. This may be true.

They grew no crops; the forest supplied most of their simple wants of food and shelter. Those wants which the forest could not supply, they sought to obtain by holding-up Aryan travellers and robbing them. It was due to this latter propensity that they came up against the new rulers of the land and often received harsh punishment at their hands. "Their gods are stronger than ours," they told themselves and held them in high respect.

And so it continued for centuries till, with the Pax Britannica, they found their old stand-by of blackmail come to an end. Hunger forced many of them to leave the jungle-clad hills and to move down and cultivate the plains.

Now, when a people begin to move they alter their values in life. An urge was born in them to be recognized as something better than wild creatures of the forest, despised and detested by all. They saw the Minas, not greatly unlike themselves yet more respected. They eagerly jumped at a suggestion to change their name from Bhil to Mina. They saw the Hindus and remembered the old respect they had learnt to be due to their gods. And just when these urges were becoming a passion, along came Arya Samaj missionaries and other politically-minded Hindus inviting them to consider themselves Hindu by religion and presumably also by community. Their cup of gladness was full: at last they were on the ladder reaching up to social recognition. Of course they would return themselves as Hindus at the forthcoming census!

We have arrived at the point then, that most Bhils appear to desire to return their religion as Hinduism, and who is to say that they have not as much right to do so as the Muslim

who declared himself to be a Jain, the Scots-woman who said she was a Muslim or the Christian who proclaimed himself a Lapsed Methodist, or even the father who informed the enumerator that two of his children had been immaculately conceived or he hoped they had been since he was away for several years covering their births—all of which declarations were accepted at face value ?

In the case of the Bhils, however, it has to be admitted that there is this difference—one which may turn out to have no small import in the future. Their swing-over to Hinduism is a mass movement and, whether at heart the Bhil is genuinely attracted by the tenets of Brahmanism or not, there can be no doubt that, from the Hindu point of view, his conversion has more political than religious significance. But, to set against this, is the fact that Hindus themselves are divided on the subject. Orthodox Sanatanists are opposed to recognizing as Hindus anyone except themselves, and would class all those others, such as Sudras, hinduized Bhils and the like, as belonging to "other religions." It is only the advanced and politically-minded Hindus who would open the doors of their temples to these humble converts to the Brahmanical faith. Till this battle is fought out the real significance of the present Bhil move cannot be gauged, nor its results to themselves appraised. Were the Sanatanists to prevail and the Bhils adhere to their present resolve, then they might find that, in the end, they had only gained the unenviable and despised status of an "untouchable."

In the meantime the field is open to any other religion or community that cares to woo

the Bhils for their future voting power. The Bhil has always been catholic in his outlook, and he might quite easily, at present at least, be persuaded that his best interests lay in attaching himself to someone else's gods. Perhaps at the next census we shall find that all Bhils are Buddhists, Muslims, or Christians: stranger things have occurred!

## STOP PRESS.

As the preceding pages went to press before abstraction of all Tables was completed, certain interesting information had to be omitted. This information is now available and is given shortly hereunder:—

### BEGGARS AND VAGRANTS.

There are in Rajputana and Ajmer-Merwara no less than 63,000 beggars (51,000 males and 12,000 females) with 112,000 persons dependent upon them and upon the success of their begging.

### COMMUNITY INCREASES.

The following table shows the variations in strength of each community over the last forty years and the last ten years respectively.

Community	Variation 1901-1941 Percent	Variation 1931-1941 Percent
Hindus . . . . .	+32	+18
Muslims . . . . .	+37	+19
Jains . . . . .	—4	+9
Christians . . . . .	+107	+4
Sikhs . . . . .	+3887	+97
Tribes . . . . .	+90	+21
Others . . . . .	+10	+6
All Communities . . . . .	+35	+18

## SEX RATIOS.

In an earlier page it was stated that men exceed women in numbers throughout the province. The statement is correct, but up to 1931 in Banswara State and Kushalgarh Chiefship, which are predominantly Bhil in population, females slightly exceeded males. The ratio has now dropped just below parity, and in other States with a large percentage of Bhils stands at approximately 970 females to every 1,000 males—a considerably higher ratio than for any other community.

## ANIMISTS.

In 1931 a total of 229,000 persons returned themselves as Animist by religion. This figure has now decreased to 5,717, of whom 5,702 are from Tonk State and the remaining 15 from Marwar. It would seem that, outside the Muslim State of Tonk, Animism has been completely ousted by Hinduism.

